Options magazine

MARIN'S PROGRESSIVE VOICE

Fall 1991

"You can't clear up the water
till you get
the hogs out of the creek..."
Feature on Populist
Jim Hightower

Also Inside:

Marin Water - Can We Afford It?
Wetlands Assaulted
Slide Ranch Educates City Kids
Gays in Marin
and much more...

The piggies of this country are not only muddying up the creek, they are draining it dry. The signs of economic struggle are everywhere: organizations doing important work are watching shrinking budgets and staff, small businesses are going under and everyone is running as fast as they can just to stay in the same place. There's money out there, but it all goes into supporting "casino" capitalism as Jim Hightower coins it. We feature Hightower in this issue of Options because he tells it like it is and, more important, he has answers.

It is possible to invest in the community, have economic growth and not be destructive to the environment. It's not about attracting outside developers, creating mammoth water projects, or building a new shopping mall. Opportunities exist. We just need to tap into the creative and innovative people who are already here, investing in a long term future that benefits everyone.

Some might call it utopian dreaming, but Hightower made it work. We can make it work here too. But first we have to stop fighting each other and start working together, sharing resources and respecting differences.

We also have to demand our tax money back. Common Agenda resolutions circulating the county are asking local governments to call for a massive military cutback to restore local government money. The story about the wetlands is another example of how the federal government is depriving us of local control. All of these issues are touched on in the following articles.

We need a democracy movement in this country. We need to stand shoulder to shoulder and face the tanks that are rolling into our communities: the tanks of economic depression, erosion of civil liberties and environmental degradation. We need to push them out of the way so we can move forward and build a livable world.

It is not enough anymore to just keep your own house in order. Our drinking water is being poisoned by those hogs down there in the creek. The wells are drying up. We need each other. Are Americans ready to take that spiritual leap and discover our interconnectedness? Our ancestors discovered it thousands of years ago. The secret of survival is to band together as a community. That simple truth hasn't changed.

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Options magazine

Fall 1991

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Distribution Manager Wanted

A lot of people are asking where they can get Options. You can't. We send to subscribers and then give the rest away at meetings and events. We need someone to take on distribution. Any takers?

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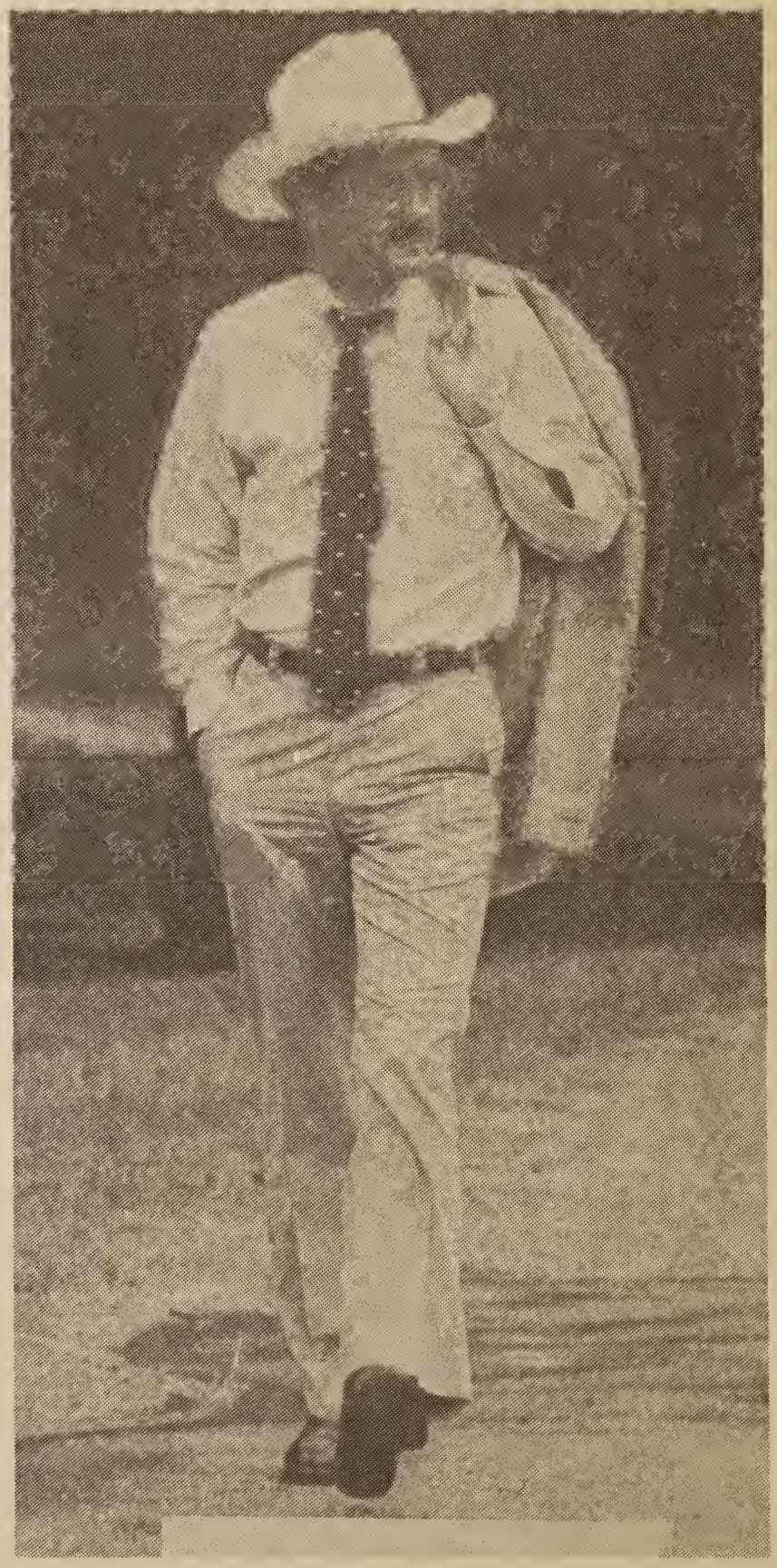
Jim Hightower

Taking Back America

by Wendi Kallins

All through the '80s we were told that, if government just got out of the way, business would take care of the rest and set this country on its feet again. Instead we have seen our country brought to its knees, with the cost of living skyrocketing and real income spiraling downward. Republicans want to stay the course, promising a swift end to the "recession." Democrats just cower in the corner sniveling about a better safety net. One of the lone voices of common sense to rise above this mediocrity is Jim Hightower, former Texas agricultural commissioner. With the heart of a radical and the brains of a businessman, Hightower speaks the working man's tongue. And people are starting to listen.



"The central issue is this," he drawls. "Too few people control all the money and power, and they use that control to hold down the rest of us. Farmers and consumers, small business and labor, middle-income and low-income, beansprout eaters and snuff dippers - we're all together in this struggle against The Powers That Be."

Hightower is the national chair of the Financial Democracy Campaign (FDC), a coalition of grassroots citizens groups, labor, business and religious organizations that has its own answers to the S&L bailout as well as a new angle on the country's banking system. The goal, he says, is to really address, from a working person's viewpoint, the issue of money.

"The monetary policy of this country is too important to be set strictly by bankers," he said. "The bankers have been telling us, 'You folks can't be messing with money, because you'll mess it up.' Well, look at the job they've done. The S&L collapse and bank collapses are clear evidence of the mess they have made. The only interests they serve are the interests of Wall Street."

Hightower proposes a new Federal Reserve system that would have a minority of bankers on the board and would instead be inclusive of farmers, consumers, small business people and working people, fully representing community needs. These are the people most affected by these policies, he says. And they are the ones who should be making the decisions. The FDC believes that taxpayers should not be

forced to bail out the S&Ls for their bad business practices nor should the deregulations of the banking system be allowed to proceed. Instead, FDC is advocating a series of measures that would tax the banking industry directly to get bank insurance funds, with contingency plans to back up the fund with a special tax on wealthy investors.

The FDC is only the latest scheme of Jim Hightower to give economic power back to the little guy. It is a populist crusade he has been fighting all his life. He began his political career in the late '60s as a legislative assistant to the populist senator Ralph Yarborough (D-Texas). He branched out on his own in the early '70s, founding the Ralph Nader-allied Agri-Business Accountability Project and writing two books with his partner Susan DeMarco, *Eat Your Heart Out* and *Hard Tomatoes, Hard Times*. The latter attacks the land-grant schools and extension services for cozying up to the agro-chemical complex, which manipulated farmers to use bigger machines and more chemicals.

He left Washington in the late '70s to edit Austin's progressive journal *The Texas Observer*. That, too, came to an end when he wrote in his farewell editorial, "There comes a time when writing about the bastards ain't enough." His first bid for office was narrowly defeated when he ran for railroad commissioner. Then in 1982, he used the momentum he built on that campaign to successfully challenge the office of agricultural commissioner.

"There comes a time when writing about the bastards ain't enough"

Hightower spent the next eight years (he was re-elected by a landslide in '86) fabricating a whole new meaning to the back-office position. Finally he was able to put his ideas to the test. The working people of this country don't need a hand-out, he claimed. They just want the opportunity to do for themselves. Hightower gave them that opportunity.

With a limited budget and a dedicated staff, Hightower revitalized the small farmer in Texas. In Waller County near Houston, watermelon farmers were losing 40 percent of their crop to rot in the field and selling the rest on the side of the road. His staff organized the individual farmers into a cooperative and then opened up new markets for them through the Kroger chains. In Dawn, Texas, a cooperative flour mill was built for wheat farmers who had been watching all the profits go to the processors.

He encouraged new crops, crops that appealed to a growing market of city people interested in healthy, non-chemical foods. He doubled the number of farmers' markets across the state. He then set up international markets through the "Taste of Texas" promotions that pushed Texas products around the world. As a result, Texas livestock exports rose from $6 million to $77.5 million during Hightower's tenure in office. Even the most conservative businessman can't sneeze at those statistics.

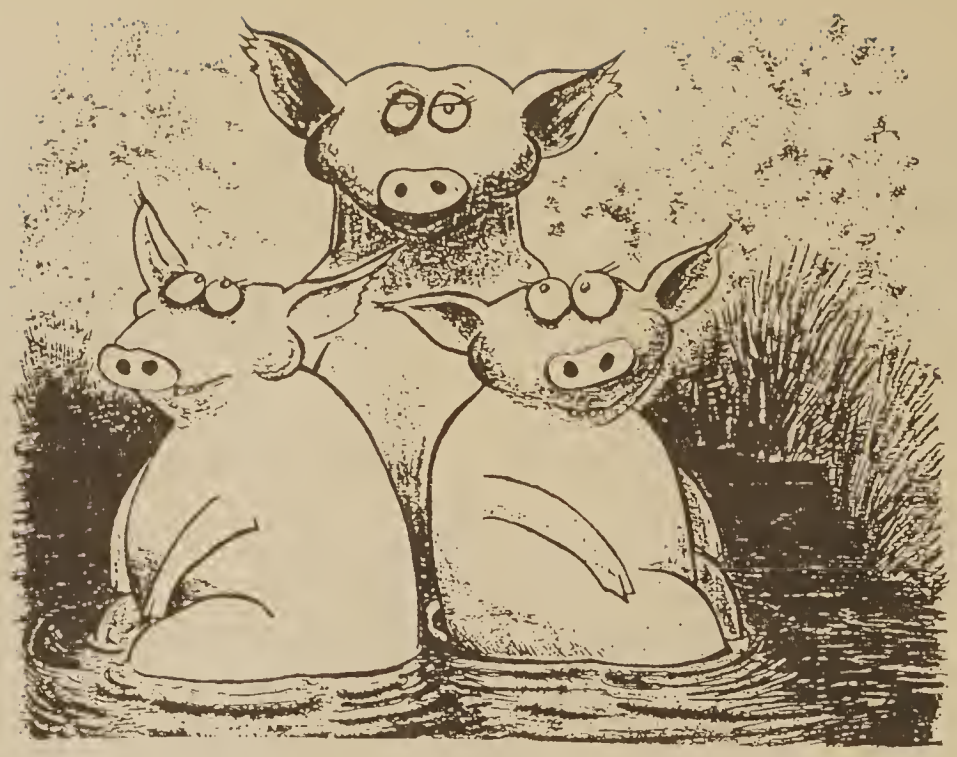
"People are easily motivated if our government entities can turn to them and say, 'We trust you. We trust our destinies to you. We'll give you the tools and you do the building and in turn we'll put capital in your hands. We'll invest in your brains and in your pride.' What we need is to have Americans get America moving again."

The emphasis is on self-help and mutual cooperation. These aren't high-cost, high-tech solutions. They are feet-on-the-ground, hands-on projects that create new businesses, new jobs and new incomes. They create a foundation for communities to grow for years to come. He calls it "percolate up" economics.

This should be the conservative's dream except that Hightower pointedly cuts out the power of big business. He raised the wrath of the petro chemical industry with his strict guidelines against chemical fertilizers and pesticides, pushing organic farming instead. The city, he told the farmers, is the market. And the city people don't want poisons on their food. "Grow the food the people want," he said. "Grow it on a small family farm, and you can grow it better and cheaper."

He insists that environmental safeguards are completely compatible with economic growth. "The environment *is* economic growth. We showed it in Texas as in organic farming where entire new industries were generated. Texas cotton was used for insulation for buildings and airplanes. The industry for new biological controls for pests is huge." He and his staff helped create a processing operation that made newsprint out of a plant called "kenaf." Those entities have created more jobs and more local income than attracting a large manufacturer ever would.

This is what makes Hightower so dangerous. His



programs work. He has his finger on the pulse of the common people, who, by and large,are against big government. He speaks their language, with a casual North Texas lilt. He jokes and cajoles them into listening and then he gives them something to listen to.

The key to winning the South, he tells the Democrats, is not moderation, but passion. "The South is a culture that has invented better than two dozen hot sauces to put on breakfast eggs," he says. "I suggest to you that this is not a moderate culture. We like our food, our music, our love affairs, and our politics hot! And, in fact, candidates with strong values, with very firm positions and anti-establishment politics generally are the ones who win."

Liberals have to face the fact that Americans don't like the welfare system. "We've got to find a way to get money in people's pockets that's not taxpayers' money." He calls his programs "people's capitalism - capitalism that spreads its benefits to the many instead of just the few."

"My grandma told me you can't clear up the water till you get the hogs out of the creek. And you can't get the hogs out of the creek by calling [sweetly] 'Here hog, here hog.' You have to get down in there and put some muscle into it." Hightower campaigned to the Texas voters, "It's time to get government acting again as a catalyst for a competitive, developing economy. Time to free enterprise from the grip of oligarchic mega-conglomerates that are wasting billions of dollars on 'Casino Capitalism' mergers that produce nothing."

In the past few years, he notes, "We've seen one conglomerate buying another, one set of investors taking over the management from another set of investors, producing nothing. No increase in productivity, no new products, no new jobs, no new competitiveness and no new wealth. Just money changing hands - money chasing its own tail."

Rather than luring in a multinational to build a factory to revitalize a local economy, Hightower's solution is to invest in the people who are already there. "People who can make a whole lot happen for very little effort by the state...we came to see government not as a deliverer of bushel baskets of money but as a catalyst for the enterprise that already exists. We're generating growth by spreading thousands of seeds at a grassroots level. We say we're for upward mobility; we say we're for a decentralized economic system; we say we're for genuine economic opportunity - equal opportunity for all the people; we say we're for grassroots participation in the economy. Then let's make that happen from the start."

Everyone asks Hightower when he is going to run for national office, and although he has had his eye on the Senate, he refuses to state any firm plans for the future. Instead his Financial Democracy Campaign is targeting congressional races for the '92 elections, looking at winnable districts where incumbents have been voting against the interests of the taxpayers. "They will be quite surprised to learn how their representatives have been voting," he chuckles.

He doesn't talk much about the upcoming presidential race, although he is heartened to see populist Tom Harkin and Jerry Brown as possible candidates. Hightower, however, is in this for the long haul. "We need to see this election as a building process. We need to shift the debate back to the real needs of America and build to the next election. We've been waiting too long for someone to come riding in on a white horse. We're not looking to '92 or even to '96 but maybe to the year 2000. What is important is that we have to take this country back."

Jim Hightower will be coming to Marin in the spring as a keynote speaker on a conference planned by a coalition of progressive organizations. Details of the conference will be forthcoming in future issues of Options.

Opinion

Dear Options,

Another outstanding issue of *Options*. Find a check for $10.00 enclosed. Allow me the privilege of responding to some of its contents.

First off, I do not agree with the concept that only the far right is Russo-phobic or NRA infected. Indeed, it is possible to find many Democrats and even those unallied who suffer the same malaise.

With regard to who will be responsible for maintaining a world government [see "Who's Giving the New World Orders" *Options* Summer 1991], whether it falls to Russia or the United States pales by comparison with the knowledge that mankind stands perched precariously on the abyss. For the past few years I have communicated my concern to members of our government regarding the advisability of engaging in unilateral disarmament, with the understanding that the U.N. protect such an act.

The moral suasion in such an act would have a profound effect throughout the entire world. Not only would the energy and money saved from such behavior be available for social concerns, but it would also be a signal to the world that we can no longer depend upon force of arms to settle inevitable world problems. Of course, nobody listens. It's much like crying for help deep in the Carlsbad Caverns. I shall persist.

I cannot predict what will transpire tomorrow but my 55 years of observing and listening to the far right only reinforces my attitude that they are only interested in accruing power. Needless to say, we can see clear evidence of the manner in which they've wielded that power.

Now some remarks about your mention of Israel, "Most progressives believe that something should be done about Israel and a U.N. move to do something would likely be considered welcome by many".

I do not apply a label to myself so I cannot be called a progressive. I'm satisfied to know and understand that there are deep problems. Most of those we are faced with are solvable. The solutions to many of our problems are predicated upon individual and collective awareness of said problems and the willingness to share energy and, if need be, material wealth.

As for Israel, I must wax personal. When I was a young man looking for work in the '30s, I was faced with the reality that some businesses would not hire me because I was a Jew. At school, although there were many Jewish kids, there were times when I had to defend myself against "Christian" aggression. As a graduate from high school, I was witness to young men marching around in Hitler Youth uniform wearing the swastika armband, not in Berlin, Germany, but in Port Jefferson, Long Island. When I served in the U.S. Marine Corps during WWII, I had to lie in my bunk and listen to fellow grunts excoriating Jews, blacks and the Kooks we were going to fight.

My wife's family was the recipient of letters from relations in Germany pleading with them to find some way to extricate them from the country. Alas, they went to the ovens.

The litany of deprecation of self-esteem is too lengthy to recount. Even now I am in contact with a person who tells me that the Zionist Organization (all Jews) was responsible for urging President Roosevelt from allowing Jews to emigrate to America during and prior to WWII. No evidence is forthcoming to substantiate such a charge and I would personally be most chagrined to discover any truth to the assertion.

Israel is a tiny sliver of land in a mostly inhospitable geology populated by an energetic and purposeful group of Jews. It took 2500 years to recognize this dream. Not all of what happens there is healthy with regard to interpersonal relations. Frankly, I am discouraged at the treatment of Palestinians, many of whom deserve to be treated as fellow human beings. However, the fault is not entirely Israel's. Can you imagine the breadth and depth of feeling that must occur among Israelis to see an enemy to the north, Syria, an enemy to the east, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and a potential enemy to the south, Egypt. The reason for this enmity is threefold. One, Israel represents the establishment of a potential egalitarian society. Can you imagine what this must do to the hierarchy of the above named countries? Two, Israel borders on the Mediterranean and its value to international trade. Three, the Israelis do not subscribe to the Muslim religion even though historians agree that much of the religion is based on Judaic teaching.

I suppose I have enough information and personal feeling to continue on ad nauseam. Let me say in closing that those who see fit to be critical of Israel do as I've done. Stand on the heights of Jerusalem and, if the air is clear and the view unobstructed, catch a glimpse of the sparkling Mediterranean!

Bill Luft
Fairfax

Editor:

On more than one occasion Marin's voters have collectively stuck their heads in the sand, hoping if we did nothing the problems would go away. Unless we take positive action now with a "yes" vote on Measure W November 5, the thing that may go away is our water. Sure, the odds are we'll have a wet winter, but what if we have another year or two or three of drought? Nobody expected it to continue the past five years either!

Let's at least give ourselves another source of water if the crisis continues. (Remember, we won't be *required* to purchase water from Sonoma County if we don't need it, but what a tragedy it would be to need it and not be able to get it.) Please join me in voting "yes" on the water measure.

Susan E. Bice
San Rafael

Common Agenda

Local Activists Work to Halve Pentagon Budget

by Lew Tremaine

Activists from across Marin are lobbying their local officials to pass resolutions calling for military spending cuts that would allow more federal funds for local projects. The effort is part of a nationwide project ca'ied Common Agenda.

Two Marin town councils, in San Anselmo and Fairfax, passed the resolution in September and at least two more cities, Corte Madera and Mill Valley, were expected to consider it in October. The resolution is modeled after a referendum passed by 73 percent of Chicago's voters calling for 10 percent reductions in the military budget in each of the next five years, thus halving the military budget by 1996. Furthermore, the resolution asks that the money be redirected toward social programs and local government projects.

Three Marin peace and justice groups are spearheading the effort here. They include The Marin Center for Peace & Justice, Marin Sane Freeze and People's Agenda Southern Marin.

According to Dr. Bill Rothman of MCPJ, members of his organization and Sane Freeze used San Anselmo as the template for gaining passage of the resolution. Five activists met initially with Councilmember Paul Chignell, in the hope that he would carry the resolution to his colleagues. Although he said he would endorse it, Chignell suggested that the group lobby each councilmember individually to gain a majority vote. The strategy, spearheaded by Terry Sozanski and Dorothy Hughes, worked to perfection, as the San Anselmo Council unanimously endorsed the resolution.

Simultaneous to the effort in San Anselmo, Fairfax peace activists Lynn Ralston and Bob Smithfield were bringing the resolution to the attention of their town council, which heard the proposal on September 10.

The Fairfax meeting was packed with activists from around the county, but, it was not necessary for them to speak. After presentations from one representative each from Sane Freeze and MCPJ, the council unanimously passed the resolution with no debate.

According to Rothman, the strategy for passing the Common Agenda Resolution town-by-town hinges largely on assuring a majority vote before putting it on the agenda of a public meeting. While it appears that strategy will be adhered to in Corte Madera, where Faye Hinze and Francis Stedman are heading the effort, Mill Valley is proceeding with a public hearing despite council resistance.

In Mill Valley, where People's Agenda Southern Marin is lobbying councilmembers, approval of the resolution did not appear to be forthcoming at press-time. According to veteran activist Alan Barnett, mayor and congressional candidate Dick Spotswood had rallied his colleagues against the resolution on the premise that municipal governments have no business telling the federal government what to do. This was the same argument Spotswood used to derail Mill Valley peace activists' attempts to get a council resolution passed against military involvement in the Persian Gulf last winter.

The Common Agenda resolution was scheduled to be heard on October 7 in Mill Valley. According to Barnett and fellow PASM activist Cheryl Gilbert, the issue would be brought before the council despite the apparent lack of a majority vote and despite Councilmember Kathleen Foote's attempts to have the item removed from the agenda. Foote, Barnett said, was thought to be a supporter of the resolution until she turned on it.

Gilbert noted that the resolution will be on the ballot in San Francisco this November and that it will be on the Richmond and El Cerrito ballots in April. She would like to see the measure put on the ballot in Mill Valley if the council refuses it. "I don't think it should stop with the council," she stated.

As to taking the resolution before the council without a secured majority favoring it, Barnett said, "We definitely won't back off this. As you know, that's not the way we do things around here."

While the drive to gain municipal support for Common Agenda progresses (efforts to bring San Rafael on board are underway as well) another group of activists is discussing the resolution with the Board of Supervisors. One person from each of Marin's five supervisorial districts has

been assigned to each supervisor to garner a majority vote at the county level.

In West Marin, John Cook is working to secure Gary Giacomini's vote. In Southern Marin, Dave Sarvis is doing likewise. Holly Biedul is lobbying Hal Brown in the Ross Valley and Kokica Steel is discussing the resolution with Bob Roumiguiere in San Rafael. Supervisor Brady Bevis of Novato has already announced her support for the resolution.

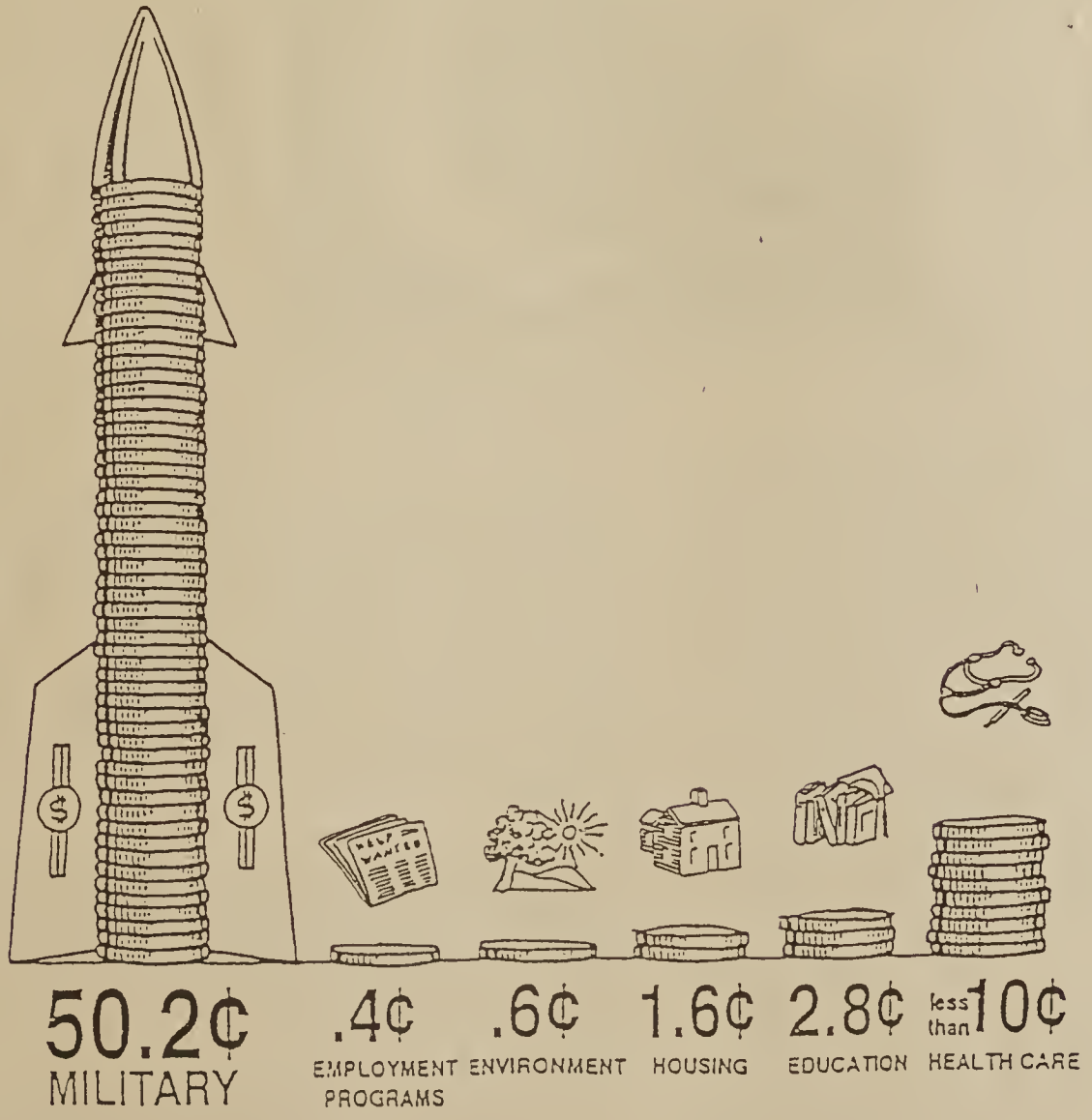
According to Rothman, the two additional votes needed to pass the resolution at the county level should be easy. He noted that Giacomini, Brown and Aramburu were among sponsors of a Sane Freeze advertisement in the Pacific Sun calling for a reprioritization of national budget goals. He believes that support of the resolution would be a logical extension of the three supervisors' support for the Sane Freeze ad.

In presenting their argument for the resolution, Common Agenda activists note that just over half of all federal tax dollars (59.2 percent) are spent in military pursuits. That fact they contrast with the 0.4 percent spent on employment programs, the 0.6 percent spent on the environment, the 1.6 percent spent on housing and 2.8 percent spent on education.

Sane/Freeze has broken down those figures into the average amount that Marin residents pay toward the above categories. On average, Marinites pay $2,087 per household to the military. That totals $744 million from Marin alone to the military each year.

Francis Stedman feels that figure alone will rally Marin residents in support of the resolution, especially, she says, when they realize that the entire county budget totals only $129.5 million this fiscal year.

Additionally, according to Common Agenda Coalition literature, the United States ranks first in the world in military spending, nuclear bombs and warheads, military bases, size of naval fleet, number of combat aircraft and military technology. At the same time, and in sharp contrast to these figures, the U.S. ranks fifth in literacy, 13th in maternal mortality, 14th in life expectancy, 20th in school-aged population per teacher, 21st in infant mortality and 22nd in population per doctor.



Peace Sign in the Sand

by Andy Peri

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most significant and intractable political problems in the world today. Recent events are further compounding the crisis. Despite new opposition from members of the cabinet of Prime Minister Shamir and reported threats of suspension of $10 billion in loan guarantees from the U.S., Israel continues to build housing in the West Bank and Arab East Jeruselum. Hard-liner housing minister General Ariel Sharon has, despite recent housing budget cuts, obstinately continued with the largest building program in the 24-year history of Israel's occupation of the West Bank.

The investment of millions of dollars into housing on land which was seized during the 1967 war is considered by the Arab nations to be a major road block for any Mid-East peace process which may include a sovereign state for the Palestinians in the West Bank. Although the U.S. is making loud noises about the upcoming Mid-East Peace Conference scheduled for October, many have doubts that such a discussion could bring any positive results as long as Israel continues to cling to the occupied territories.

The Israel government's refusal to concede that they should ease the accelerated rate of building has roots in ancient Jewish tradition. The predominate stretch of land where biblical figures had their experiences as conveyed in the Old Testament stretched from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River - this was the land of Israel. Although Zionists wanted these same borders to be drawn by the U.N. in 1947, they had to compromise, sharing roughly half with the Palestinian Arabs who occupied much of the land at that time. The attitude of many Zionists was reflected in 1947 by David Ben-Gurion's words, "We will settle now for half a loaf and dream about the rest later."

Not every Israeli is so committed to restoring the biblical state of Israel. A deeply divided country, many Israelis are less concerned with fulfilling religious prophesies and more interested in the ethnic identity embodied in having a homeland. While nervous about sustaining secure borders, they are tired of living in a constant state of war.

Both Israelis and Palestinians claim historical and religious roots to the same piece of turf. Until Israeli dreams of an Israel stretching from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan river are altered, many believe that there can be no resolution to the stalemate embodied in the oppression of Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza strip. Arab neighbors have made it clear that long-term security depends on trading land for peace.

This is a conflict that admits to no easy solution due to its agonizing complexity and emotional explosiveness. Among the many complicating factors are: the decimation of European Jewry by the Nazis during the Holocaust and the collective guilt of the West for this unspeakable horror; the dispossession of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homeland and the destruction of their society during the Zionist settlement in Palestine and during the subsequent creation of the state of Israel; the involvement of British colonialism in the origins of the conflict; the role of the Arab states in the conflict; the effect of American-Soviet rivalry on the conflict; and the influence of religion.

The creation of a sovereign Palestinian homeland, a commitment by both Palestinians and Israelis to a lasting peace, self-determination, mutual recognition and security are a few of the solution-oriented themes which will be discussed during a conference entitled "One Land, Two Peoples" which will be ongoing throughout October at Alexander Hall at the San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo.

Conference organizers via spokesperson David Glick regard this event as "one small step towards building mutual understanding and reconciliation." This event should help attendees to more fully understand the complex web of issues, historic and current, that make solving problems in the Mid-East so difficult.

Unfortunately, by this printing the conference is already

underway, but video and/or audio tape will be used to record each of the events.

The conference ends on Sunday, October 20 with an afternoon and evening of music, dance and visual art from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Performers include Dabke-Palestinian dance by Roots; Linda Hirschhorn and Vocolot-Israeli and Jewish music; poet Lorene Zarou-Zouzounis; and Naomi Newman of A Traveling Jewish Theatre. The evening will also include a slide show on the "Break the Silence" Mural Project as well as an art exhibition curated by painter Elly Simmons including 45 art works. There will also be art presented by Doug Minkler, George Azar, Jos Sances, Salim Yaqub, Frank Garvey, Susan Felix and Katya Wallins.

For information about the tapes or other questions regarding this very special event, contact the Marin Center for Peace and Justice at 415-459-5676.

SnapShots

Marin City Community Garden

Marin City's community garden will bloom again, thanks to a grant provided by the Marin City Community Development Corporation. When county funds, which had financed the project for years, were cut off this summer, the Marin City Tenants' Council had to scramble to find an alternate source of support.

The new grant will enable the Council to hire a gardener to tend half the space, where crops will be grown for distribution to needy southern Marin families. The other half of the garden will be available to low-income individuals and families in southern Marin who wish to plant, tend and harvest their own crops. For more information, call Charles Byrd at 332-3218.

Fair Housing Program

Bigoted landlords, beware! The Feds came through with a grant for the Marin Housing Center to do random testing for discriminatory housing practices. Starting in mid-October, undercover housing staff will pose as potential tenants to identify landlords who refuse to rent to blacks, Hispanics and other minorities, or to families with children.

Until now, such tests have been performed only in response to specific complaints. A report of discrimination against a black tenant, for example, will first be tested by a black staffer, then by a white staffer. If the black staffer's application is rejected in favor of the white applicant, a staff counselor confronts the landlord and attempts to place the client. If mediation attempts fail, the program assists in bringing suit against the offender. A settlement can cost the landlord up to $150,000. To report a case of housing discrimination, call the Fair Housing Hotline, 457-5025.

Project MOVE

Elderly homeless people in Marin will have a better chance of surviving the coming winter if Project MOVE's plans for a communal house come through. The agency is now negotiating to lease a large home in San Rafael to be sub-let to 12 of the homeless community's neediest. Tenants will include the aged and the sick, along with enough able-bodied housemates to care for the frail ones.

Last winter, Project MOVE took in 40 people who had been released from hospitals to wander the streets, housing them in hotels and motels. It is the only program in Marin for convalescing homeless people. It is also the only program that works with the homeless as peers, and provides an on-going support system that gets people off the streets for keeps.

Watch for news of a benefit for the project, coming in December, to be emceed by actor Peter Coyote. For more information, or to volunteer for Project MOVE, call 453-0493.

Santa Rosa Wastewater Watch

The city of Santa Rosa still hasn't decided where to dump its surplus wastewater (see "Who Will Santa Rosa Dump on Next?", Options, Winter 1991), but it looks like the sewage hits the fan on November 13. The Water Board has ordered the city to certify a final environmental impact report by that date, or else face a hefty fine.

The city has to choose between discharging into the fragile and pristine esteros of West Marin, the already stressed Russian River, San Pablo Bay, or some combination of the three. Local environmental groups have organized staunch opposition to any contamination of the esteros or further degradation of the river. They urge supporters to attend the public hearing to be held in Santa Rosa in early November (date to be announced). A bus will be provided to take Marinites from Point Reyes to the meeting and back. For more information, call the Environmental Action Committee, 663-9312.

Marin's Water Future

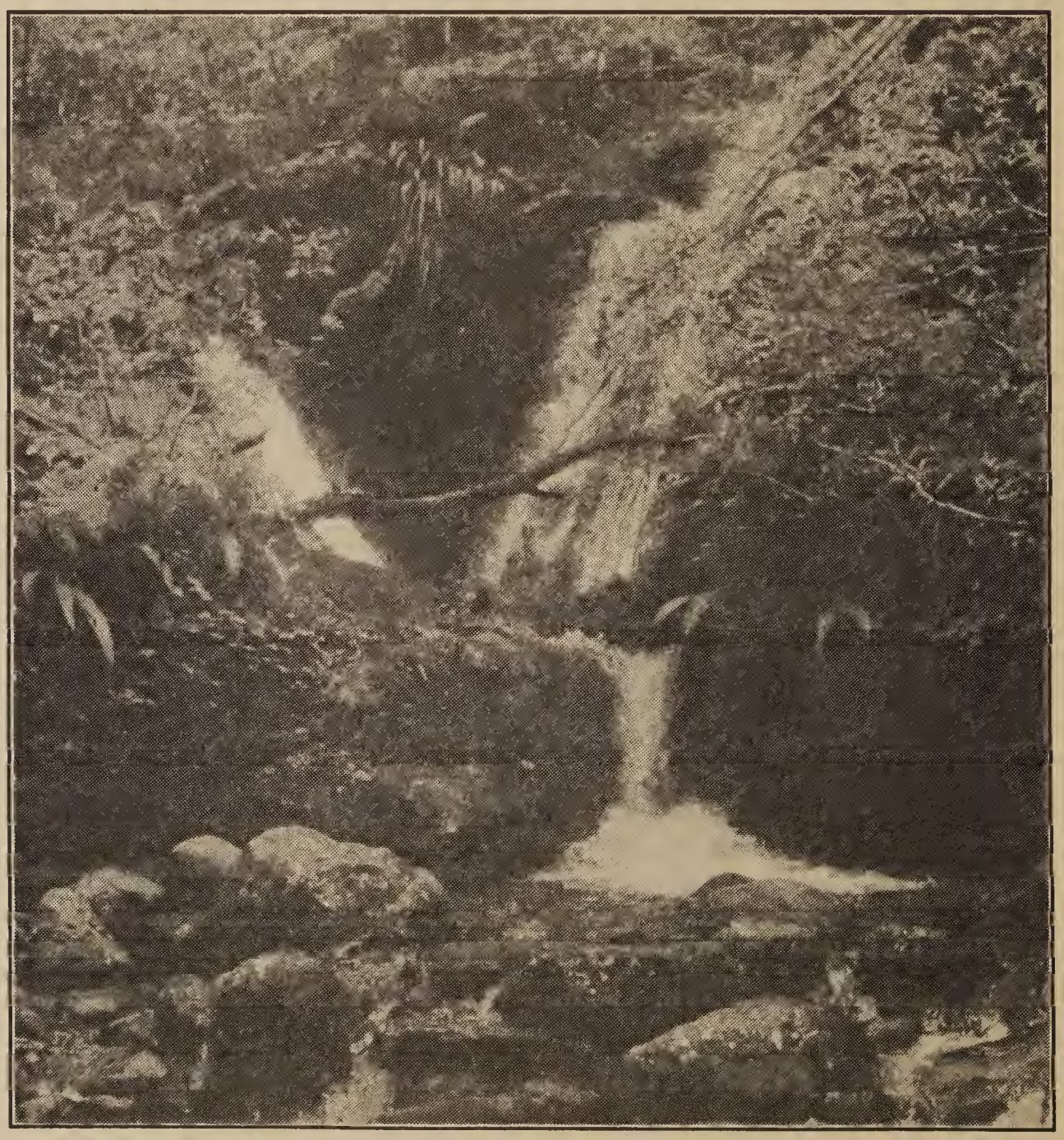
- Daniel Solnit

A generation ago most people took water for granted. With steady rains, full reservoirs, and a growth rate below 1% a year, Marin's water supply seemed too secure to worry about. (Rather like oil, rainforests, and the ozone layer.)

Five years into our second severe drought cycle we have awakened from our complacent neglect. Some residents still imagine water scarcity to be a "temporary inconvenience;" it is not. Marin is a semi-arid region with a watershed severely overtaxed by human use. Changes in global weather patterns brought about by human activity make rainfall increasingly unpredictable. Drought conditions may recur for much of the near future; common sense dictates that we regard limited supply as a semi-permanent condition.

On Sept. 24, the directors of Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) approved a plan to import more water from the Russian River. Measure W, which will appear on the November 5 ballot, approves a bond of $80 million to begin construction of facilities to acquire this new water and other system improvements. (The measure lists two options: the Russian River project, and an even more costly desalination project, which has since been effectively ruled out.)

If implemented, this plan will affect almost every aspect of Marin's political future. In spite of the far-reaching consequences of this action, many residents remain unaware of the issues involved, and most do not understand them. What follows is an introduction to the labyrinth of Marin water politics.



HOW MUCH WATER DO WE HAVE?

MMWD encompasses most of Marin, excluding Novato and the West Marin communities. The district provides water to about 170,000 residents in 53,000 homes, and to a variety of commercial and other users. Residential use accounts for 70% of the district's usage (less during rationing), and commercial, 21%. About a third of the water in both categories goes to "outside" use, primarily for plants, gardens, and landscaping. The remaining 9% of district water goes to "unmetered" uses, such as fire hydrants and leakage from pipes.

At present MMWD can produce 30,000 to 35,000 acre-feet per year from within its system and purchases an additional 4,300 acre-feet of Russian River water from Sonoma County. (An acre-foot [a/f] is 325,851 gallons, about enough to supply three households for a year.) Total storage capacity of the MMWD reservoirs is 80,000 a/f. Currently the reservoirs contain about 43,000 a/f.

In 1985 the District's "operational yield" was defined as the amount of water required to get through a two-year drought such as 1976-78 with no reserve. This assumed a 15% reduction in use the first year, and 33% the second. In its 1989 Water Supply Master Plan, MMWD redefined its effective capacity from two years' supply (70,000 a/f) to two years plus an extra 10,000 a/f (80,000 total). This redefinition assumes only a 10% reduction during the worst drought. The District attributes this change to the experience of the '76-77 drought, in which water levels in the reservoirs fell below the intake pipes and had to be pumped out at increased expense and decreased quality due to mud and silt. It is this redefinition, questioned by critics, which yields the current shortage - on paper, at least - of 5,000 a/f/year, and the presumed need for the additional water presently imported from the Russian River.

HOW MUCH WATER DO WE NEED?

According to MMWD, we need 10,000 a/f of new supply; half to make up the current (District-defined) shortfall, and half to meet projected demands from new growth in the district over the next 35 years. This projected need is based on several assumptions, all of which are hotly debated by water experts. First, it assumes a 100% build-out throughout the district; in other words, that every possible new construction - homes, offices, malls - allowed under the master plans for the cities and county will actually be built. MMWD argues that it must provide enough water for any foreseeable level of growth, up to this maximum. Obviously this is not likely to happen, given past growth patterns and the concerted opposition to such an increase in growth rate. A more persuasive explanation is that the 3-to-2 majority on the district's board of directors want to escape from the tremendous 'heat' they have received from customers upset over rationing, and from developers upset at the moratorium for new water permits. They apparently see a big new supply project as their way out. In fact, measure W may turn out to be a source of even more heat.

MMWD's second assumption is equally alarming: that existing customers cannot be relied on to conserve. Pointing to an unexpected gradual increase in domestic water use from 1980-88, MMWD maintains that Marin consumers are unwilling to significantly reduce their use, and that the best that can be achieved is a halt of the increase in use. This is clearly not the case. During the 1976-77 drought, district residents cut their per person use to a heroic 53 gallons/day. After mandatory rationing was lifted, usage stayed relatively low for a couple of years, then began rising to a peak of 108 gallons/day in 1987. (District projections are based on holding use at peak 1987 levels.) Under voluntary rationing during 1988-90, use again dropped off, to a present level of about 67 gallons/day.

MMWD states present demand as 35,000 a/f, yet the actual amount of water district customers used in each of the last few years was closer to 30,000 a/f, and by the district's own admission, it will sell even less next year - due to conservation by the public! The district has virtually abandoned conservation as a primary strategy, despite clear evidence of the public's demonstrated willingness to conserve and the fact that conservation is the quickest, cheapest, most efficient, and most environmentally sound option available.

TOO LITTLE WATER - OR TOO MUCH WASTE?

Marin Conservation League's Water Committee has taken a look at these questions, and come up with very different answers. Committee head Steve Kinsey offered a few examples of the significant potential for savings through conservation. He points out that MMWD only provides for 8% savings through efficiency measures, and suggests that a more "optimistic" figure is 30% reduction over existing use, yielding a yearly reduction of potential demand of 10,500 a/f. Increasing rationing levels during the worst droughts above MMWD's trivial 10% yields another 1000. Cutting the future growth rate to a more realistic 50% of maximum yields another 2500. Transferring Hamilton to North Marin could add 1250. In total, Kinsey estimates that demand could be reduced by over 15,000 a/f, which represents more than half our current usage.

Kinsey also points out opportunities to increase supply within the present system. upgrading the use of Phoenix Lake and other system improvements, combined with improved coordination between the two Marin districts could yield another 2,500 a/f.

The Resource Renewal Institute, in developing its Green Plan project for Marin (see box), has also taken a look at these questions and come up with some even more striking numbers, especially in the area of water efficiency. Unlike conservation, which relies on consumers to change their usage patterns, increases in efficiency depend only on changes in equipment or technology. Resource analyst Joel Canyon, architect of the Green Plans' Water Assessment, uses the example of toilets: 3 out of every 10 gallons used in the average Marin home goes to flushing the toilet. Total district use (home and business) for flushing toilets is 8,207 a/f. To put this into perspective, we use 15,880

gallons a year per person - most of a swimming pool - just to flush! By installing ultra-low flow (1.6 gallon-per-flush) toilets in all homes and businesses, the District would save over 5000 a/f per year; this is a two-thirds reduction of current toilet usage, and a 17 percent saving on our total water use. MMWD could provide free toilets and installation to all customers at less than half the cost per gallon of the Russian River Project.

Water efficient technologies have proven to be cost-effective in use throughout the country, especially when compared to large, capital-intensive new projects. Canyon believes that MCL figures are low and estimates that water efficiency measures alone could save a total of over 10,000 a/f per year, about 35% of current total usage. Reclamation projects planned by the district can provide another 2,000 a/f.

Other water analysts have reached similar conclusions. A serious, ongoing conservation effort, combined with efficiency measures, reclamation, and improved management and planning can meet all our water needs for the next decade and beyond.

What Will It Cost

Measure W looks like it will cost $160 million. In fact, with the cost of other improvements, reclamation facilities, Sonoma costs which will be passed on to us, and 4% inflation over 15 years, the real cost is over $300 million. This project will cost us several times more per gallon than conservation and efficiency measures.

MMWD's financial consultants, Bartle and Wells, prepared a financial master plan for the district which was presented in July of '91. In response to public questions and comments, they prepared a supplemental document which MMWD directors did not release. This document, which has been obtained and circulated, concludes that the financing method proposed under Measure W will cost millions more than necessary. By constructing portions of the system as needed under a pay-as-you-go plan (favored by MCL and others), the entire project could be funded for only $25 million in bond funds, relying more on capitol reserves for the remainder. The financing sceme for Measure 'W' wastes millions of dollars we can't afford.

THE RUSSIAN RIVER PROJECT

MMWD currently buys Russian River water through an agreement with the Sonoma County Water Authority. This water is delivered via an existing pipeline through Novato's North Marin Water District (NMWD). The contract guarantees 4300 a/f a year. This year the district bought an additional 2500 a/f of Novato's surplus. This water costs significantly more than water originating within the district and is of poorer quality. Novato owns the pipeline and will eventually need to use most or all of its carrying capacity to meet its own needs, squeezing MMWD out. When this will occur depends on Novato's growth rate, but it is unlikely to happen before 2005, and some estimate as late as 2025.

At present, Novato's pipeline from the Russian River has greater capacity than the combined needs of MMWD and NMWD. Kinsey suggests that MMWD "should work cooperatively with NMWD to maximize use of the existing pipeline while evaluating the success of efficiency and conservation efforts to determine if a costly separate pipeline is needed."

MMWD is in a hurry to build a new pipeline, with all the pumps, tanks, and other system improvements that go with it, in order to bring an additional 10,000 a/f of water from the Russian River to the District. In fact, board members are in such a hurry that they put an $80 million bond measure on the November ballot before they even approved the environmental impact report. Legally, this is a no-no, but the directors got around this with a little sleight-of-hand; the measure does not specify what the money will be spent on. At their September 24 meeting, they approved the E.I.R., selected the project, approved a contract with Sonoma to buy the additional water, and passed the financial plan - all in smooth succession and over the serious objections of various legal and technical experts, representatives of major community groups, and even Board Directors Chip Wray and Joan Boessenecker, who have repeatedly voted against the plan.

MEASURE W: THE POLITICS OF PANIC

It is by now obvious that we do not currently need the additional water, that the project is not cost effective and that something fishy is going on. The measure is designed to play on the public's panic about water, but there seems to be a different sort of panic driving the District in its rush to pass this bond and launch the project. Why the hurry?

Proponents continue to cite an urgent need for more water, but long-time board watchers have different theories. MMWD is losing money. By its own estimates, MMWD anticipates its third deficit in four years for 1990-91. Ironically, the district blames this on increased conser-

vation by customers above and beyond what the district predicted. A surcharge has been added to bills to help make up this deficit. It is a further irony that the district's planning requires discouraging conservation beyond certain levels in order to remain profitable and that the surcharge system provides a disincentive to the public to conserve.

Observers blame poor planning and mismanagement for the shortfall, and accuse the board of disregarding the advice of district staff. Some allege that staff members may feel pressured to make their reports and recommendations conform to the wishes of directors. Others blame staff members too concerned with expansion and job security for devising these ambitious projects. Measure W appears to many to be a carefully orchestrated attempt to accomplish several goals: first, to infuse the District with a large amount of uncommitted money - an $80 million "blank check" to balance the books second, to fuel growth in the district, thus providing new customers and new sources of revenue. Additionally, it may be intended to guarantee that MMWD never again has to make the politically unpopular decision to ration water or delay or deny new hookups. And, of course, someone will have to build the pipeline, the tanks, and all the new homes, offices and so on. Some of the bond money will go toward propping up a local construction industry too large to support itself on Marin's current tiny growth rate.

Under constant political pressures, a majority of the directors of MMWD has at times ignored the advice of their staff and consultants, outside experts, and many customers and community groups. Their emphasis on growth and obtaining new water rather than making better use of what we have has shown MMWD to be out of step with both the Marin public and other water utilities throughout California.

Marin faces a water crisis, but it is less one of supply than one of resource management and District mismanagement.

HOW SHOULD WE CONTROL GROWTH ?

Opponents of growth have successfully used Marin's limited water supply to reduce or stop many new developments. They argue that water hookups are the only effective tool for doing so, and urge a continuation of this strategy. District directors object to this, pointing out that their purpose is to provide water, not plan growth. In fact, Director Chip Wray seems fond of repeating that "We're only in the business of selling water." This mercantile attitude riles ecologists, who suggest that public utilities are not the same as corporations, with maximizing profit as the only criteria. They propose that the "business" of MMWD is not just selling water, but effectively managing

ONE SOLUTION: GREEN PLANS

For years communities have struggled with various parts of their resource management problem as if they were separate issues - air and water quality, energy policy, soil preservation, forestry and wildlife habitat, and so on. Government has responded with piecemeal regulation but no overall vision. Now several nations, including the Netherlands and Canada, are implementing Green Plans: national strategies that address the environment as a whole system, upon which all economic and social decisions are made.

A few of the principles which guide the Dutch Green Plan include: - no aspect of environmental quality will be allowed to get worse; - waste and toxins are reduced or prevented at the source; - polluters are required by law to pay the costs of cleanup. Green Plans have been highly successful in countries which have implemented them, in part due to the integrated, whole-system approach, and to the support from both the public and business.

There is a need for individuals and organizations to build support for Green Plans here, at both local and national government levels. To this end, Resource Renewal Institute is assessing Marin's management of key resources and developing proposals for a local model Green Plan here in Marin, which can serve as a blueprint for other counties, the state and the nation. Called the "Green Century Project," it will be based on a broad coalition of community and non-profit organizations, local governments, businesses and others.

Resource Renewal Institute was founded by Huey Johnson, former California Secretary for Resources, and is located in the Marin Headlands. For more information, call 332-8082.

MMWD is not just selling water, but effectively managing our water resources for present and future generations. In this light, the district's function properly includes an advocacy role - not to control or push growth, but for conservation and wise use of water.

Most observers agree that city and county planning agencies have not adequately worked together to plan the growth of our communities, passing this political hot potato on to the water districts. Unfortunately, this leaves water policy questions so politically charged that the criteria which should frame such decisions often get lost among the maneuvering and machinations of various interest groups. Water has become the crossroads for many other public policy debates, the bottleneck into which crowd all the forces seeking and opposing growth.

Planning officials are not free of political pressures either. Planning decisions are too often subverted to serve the needs of those with money, power, and access to those officials. The undue influence of developers and other special-interest groups forces planning officials away from their purpose - developing a comprehensive, integrated plan for all aspects of growth and change which addresses all the needs of the community or region. Instead, they are reduced to regulators, belatedly attempting to contain growth and mitigate the damage.

Long-range and regional planning is especially undermined by a lack of cooperation between various agencies, and by the lack of common criteria for making planning and policy decisions. Water and other resources such as air quality, land use, energy, and environmental quality need to be incorporated in a general approach to public policy such as the Green Plans current in several European nations (see box: Green Plans). Green Plans provide policy guidelines based on sustainability rather than endless growth, and on social and environmental values, as well as economic ones. Until we develop such an integrated approach here, we are destined to spend our time and energy putting out endless "brush fires."

WATERSHEDS AND CARRYING CAPACITY

Water is usually discussed in terms of human needs, but we are not the only residents of this county. The many plant and animal species who share Marin's watersheds with us are directly impacted by our water policies and practices. For millions of years, run-off from winter rains has fed the various creeks of the Lagunitas and Walker Creek watersheds. For the past hundred years, MMWD has captured and withheld a large and increasing portion of that run-off, resulting in the destruction of fisheries, devastation of water-dependent flora and fauna, siltation of streams and disruption of the surrounding ecosystem. Currently, humans withhold 90% of the captured runoff for our own use, releasing only 7,500 a/f back into the two stream systems. For the past decade the State Regional Water Quality Control Board has been negotiating with MMWD to release more water. The matter has gone to court, and a decision is expected in the next year. Conservationists expect the ruling to require an additional release of 5,000-7,000 a/f per year. Some regard this potential loss of supply as additional justification for the proposed Russian River project, but conservation measures cited above will more than compensate for this release.

Full restoration of our watersheds over the next several generations may require much larger releases of water, posing an interesting dilemma. Carrying capacity is a term used to describe the maximum amount of plant and animal life that can be sustained within any biosystem. We are at present living far beyond the carrying capacity of our watershed.

MMWD directors, like most people raised in western industrial societies, tend to think in terms of property and profit. They regard water as an inanimate resource, something to be extracted and sold for human consumption. The problem is one of engineering and accounting, and the ecosystem never enters the equation, except perhaps as an annoying loss as in the above example. The traditional conservationist also stands outside of nature, thinking in terms of preservation, management or repair. This person is likely to favor the eventual construction of a Russian River pipeline in order to free up more local water for release into the streams. A good case can be made for this, at least in conservationist terms: the impact of withdrawing 10,000 acre/feet, or even 20,000 or 30,000, from the Russian River is negligible. Ten thousand acre/feet constitutes less than 1% of the outflow of that system and falls within existing Sonoma EIR guidelines. The addition would more than double outflow here, and could greatly enhance restoration.

The bioregionalist or deep ecologist, however, will see the problem in terms of a living system of which humans are but one interdependent part. This person will ask different questions: How is it we have exceeded our area's carrying capacity, and how can we eventually return to living within it, in balance with the other inhabitants? How can we reduce our consumption levels so that there is enough for all creatures? What lessons can we learn from the examples of those people, Miwok, Ohlone and others, who have lived here for a thousand generations and never killed a creek or poisoned a bay? How can we have a rich, meaningful, and comfortable way of life while consuming far less water and other resources? Can we replace consumption with creativity and community? How can we live lightly, sustainably, and well?

Massive Assault on Wetlands

Pacheco Pond photo by Allan Smorra

by Barbara Salzman, Marin Audubon Society

In August George Bush launched his official assault on the nation's wetlands. Bush describes his plan as a significant step toward the goal of "no net loss." In reality, it is a well-orchestrated and three-pronged attack intended to emasculate federal wetland regulation by changing all the rules: he would revise the Wetland Delineation Manual to reclassify many thousands of acres as uplands. This redefinition ignores the fact that 80 percent of America's breeding bird population relies on wetlands, more than 50 percent of the roughly 7800 species of protected migratory birds rely on wetlands, 96 percent of commercially important fish are wetland dependent, and that isolated wetlands alone are used by 450 species of migratory birds including 26 endangered species. He would weaken the regulatory program under the guise of improvement and streamlining. At the same time, several bills are making their way through Congress, coincidentally with the purpose of crippling the 404 program, the primary tool for protecting wetlands at the federal level.

The proposed changes in the delineation manual would affect Bay Area seasonal wetlands and millions of acres of wetlands across the nation. If the lands are not covered with water for 21 days (and aerial photos have to prove it), they would not be considered a wetland. How frequently has this occurred in the last five years? The revised manual is currently in a two-month period of field testing - convenient timing to identify wetlands in the arid West.

Wetlands are a vital part of the overall ecosystem. They essentially act as a recharge, filtering the water for impurities. They also are vital to flood control. Numerous lands in Marin could be affected by changed rulings. All of the diked baylands are at risk, especially Bel Marin Keys. Other important lands include the St. Vincent property, parts of Hamilton, both LeVarone parcels, Gnoss Field and the Silveira property north of the dump in Novato. Most of these lands are now used for agriculture.

The 404 program would be effectively eliminated by expanding the use of general permits and categorizing, or ranking, wetlands; by encouraging compensation and mitigation banking; and by reducing the ability of resource agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, to comment on permit applications. The ranking scheme would have the highest ranked wetlands subject to the same regulation as now, while the lowest valued wetlands - and the categories are yet to be defined - could just be filled. Applicants could satisfy mitigation requirements by buying credits. On-site mitigation, which is the preferred sequence in 404 now, would only be required for the highest wetland category. For other categories, mitigation could be anywhere in the state. So even if the mitigation is successful, which it often isn't, what will it mean to migratory birds that depend on San Francisco Bay wetlands if wetlands lost here are mitigated in Eureka?

Of the four bad bills, the most dangerous are HR 1330 introduced by James Hayes (D-LA), which now has 160 co-sponsors, and its companion bill S1463, introduced by Senator Braux, which has 25 co-sponsors. Many provisions of these bills are identical to Bush's program. All require the presence of all three wetland parameters and the presence of water at the surface for 21 days; and, in all, the definition of hydrophytic vegetation is restricted. But the bills go even further. They redefine wetlands to exclude seasonal, ephemeral and isolated wetlands, all of which we have. They would repeal the EPA veto authority, mandate a mitigation banking program and establish a complex three-tiered classification scheme. Among the requirements are that Type A wetlands, the highest category, must have ten or more contiguous acres and be critical habitat. However, even Type A wetlands could be filled if there is an "overriding public interest." The lowest category, Type C, includes converted cropland and wetlands in "intensely

developed areas," which it is assumed do not serve significant functions. These wetlands are deregulated. Citizen suits would be effectively barred and the burden of proving an area is a wetland falls on the Corps (or in other words, the public).

Why is all of this happening now? We can thank a coalition of developers, realtors, farmers and industry for this aggressive attack. A group called the National Wetlands Coalition has been responsible for a flood of letters to legislators and the administration with "horror stories" about economic loss and loss of private property rights. They have been effective because the administration has not heard from us.

We need to tell Congress and Bush that wetlands serve a vital service for all of the nation's people, not just a few special interests. They need to hear loudly and clearly that we want our wetlands protected and that federal regulation of wetlands needs to be strengthened, not weakened. *All* wetlands should be protected by the regulatory process and permits should be required for activities that are now exempt, such as diking, discing, draining and the removal of vegetation. Ranking for the purpose of excluding wetlands from federal regulation should not be allowed. The use of general or nationwide permits should be greatly restricted to avoid cumulative environmental impacts. No wetland should be damaged or destroyed if there is a feasible alternative. To assure local values are maintained, on-site mitigation should be preferred and mitigation banks restricted. If you have a "horror story" of a local wetland lost through inadequacies in the 404 program, please write about that, also.

Flats at Gnoss Field photo by Allan Smorra

Contact:

President George Bush, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. Or call the White House switchboard at
1-202-456-1111 and leave a message.

Senator John Seymour, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510 has already supported the Hayes companion bill in the Senate. Ask him to withdraw his co-sponsorship of S1463.

Congresswoman Barbara Boxer, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515 and Senator Alan Cranston, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. Or call the legislative switchboard at 1-202-224-3121. Calls to the switchboards cost only $.15 if made before 8 a.m.

Comments on the manual go to Gregory Peck, Chief, Wetlands and Aquatic Resources Regulatory Branch, Army Corps of Engineers, Mail Code (A-104F), USEPA, 401 M Street S.W., Washington, D.C. 20460. Tell him our seasonal wetlands are essential for wildlife and that they serve other functions as well and tell him you want the manual changed to declassify these important wetlands as uplands. We have asked several local biological consulting firms to provide us with technical comments on the manual, but have not received them as yet.

Digging Up Nature's Secrets at Slide Ranch

by Amity Hodgekiss

"How can you tell a boy chicken from a girl chicken?" shouted Suki, a braided Japanese girl, above the piercing cock-a-doodle-doos of the henyard.

"Good question," said Nancy Laird, guide for the morning field trip. "The best way to tell is the males have bigger tail feathers and a big thing on their leg called a spur."

Over in the turkey pen, the sex difference was even more apparent as the male fanned his purple hued tailfeathers and strutted past a bored-looking female. The children looked puzzled when Laird told them he was dancing to get her to make baby turkeys with him.

Inside, two hens battled over a nest. The big red one kicked the small brown one out, then settled down to warm three perfect brown eggs, a task which had apparently caused this ruffling of feathers.

Though the class seemed content with the birds, it was on to the rabbit hutch. "Let's go see the bunnies!" urged the first graders' teacher, Kazuko Benjamin, as they trotted up the dirt path.

The 15 kids, from Sherman Elementary School in San Francisco, were getting their lesson far from the city today, at Slide Ranch, an interactive organic farm located on a bluff above the ocean on Route One near Muir Beach. Operating under a permit from the National Park Service, every week Slide Ranch exposes hundreds of children, including groups of mentally impaired and disabled kids, to the wonders of farm life. And on the weekends, adults and families can take advantage of Slide Ranch's unique environmental programs.

Before the hen experience, the Sherman kids had been for an early morning goat milking. Alexander, 7, said that was his favorite thing so far. "It felt so warm and hairy."

Later he would frown on finding a goat skin laid out to cure on the shed floor. "We had too many goats born this spring, and we couldn't give away all the males, so we killed one," Laird told him. "That was really hard because he had a name and everything. I might make a

photo by Allan Smorra

blanket out of his wool."

To live and work here, hundreds of young adults like Laird apply to Slide Ranch every year. The Ranch can house about five interns, who rotate in six-month intervals. Each is assigned to take care of one section of the Ranch during their tenure. But all of them serve as guides and seem natural at opening others' eyes to wonders hiding around every Slide Ranch bend.

"I want to tell you a secret about rabbits," Laird whispered. "They can hear ten times better than we can, because of those big ears. Now I want you all to cup your hand around your ears. Can you hear me better than before?"

The children nodded. "Now let's all talk softly when I bring her over," she said. "While I'm gone maybe you can guess her name. It begins with an H."

While the youngsters rattled off every H name, including Harley, they could think of, Laird came back with a large chestnut-colored bunny. "Her name is Harriet, and we have to be very quiet and careful petting her, because she's pregnant."

"Is she gonna have an egg?" asked one confused boy.

"No, she'll have bunnies," said the patient Laird.

"Today?" came another cry from the circle.

"No, in about two weeks. See those big ears we were talking about?"

Alfonso, 6, noticed big raindrops on his jacket as a storm blackened the hills and a ribbon of lightning streaked the ocean sky. "Oh no," he said. "I don't like storms." His teacher reminded him how much the gardens need the rainwater.

The rain subsided as the group made its way to the compost area. "Let's go see how Harriet's poop helps make new plants," said Laird. Out by the garden shed, the compost bin was divided into four areas, each coded by a picture of the footprints of each animal. The children saw how the fecal matter decomposed and food scraps magically changed back into dirt.

"Now pretend you're the really rich soil and we planted a broccoli seed on your head," their guide said. "Show me how we grow into all those pretty green shoots." Little arms twisted and twirled above heads as the kids played a part in the drama of plant growth.

Invited to touch the dark mud, a boy called Genesis said it smelled like peanut butter. "Delicious!" Lunchtime had arrived.

The storm drops returned, the class took refuge and had a picnic under a great eucalyptus tree. This and a row of giant Douglas firs stood as the only protection from wind and rain, today replacing the blanketing white fog.

Up the hill ran the orderly organic garden, to which several ranch hands were transporting soil from the composter. Herbs, lettuce and pepper and bean plants were interspersed with bright flowers. Overseeing these beamed the yellow faces of sunflowers. The plan is to expand the garden and sell its produce to generate more income for Slide Ranch programs. Today they're paid for largely through grants and donations.

After lunch, the children would take a walk down to the campsite, a grassy area in sight of the crashing waves. If the tide were low they could learn some marine biology from the beach poolls that have now disappeared under the high, raging surf. Above is a bathhouse, sweat lodge and fire circle, which they might explore on the overnight trip their teacher is planning for next spring.

"We're definitely coming back to camp," she said. "If I teach them about something like composting at school, they just don't get it. But here they can see how it's done. Here they learn about everything, about the circles of life."

From the road below, the half dozen brown, weathered houses and barns scattered about Slide Ranch seem to lean into the hill like the scraggly pines that mimic the motion of the wind. Perhaps decades ago, they appeared to the first owner to be slipping toward the jagged cliffs. But now they appear to have dug in their heels, determined as the people who work here and those who visit to preserve this beautiful and mysterious place.

Jacob Cohen and Michael Rosen recycle goat milk to the chickens.

Caltrans Draft EIR Published at Last

No Surprise—Caltrans Still Likes Spraying

by Dave Brast

In spite of growing public worry over the use of dangerous chemicals, the newly published Draft Environmental Impact Report on Caltrans' Statewide Vegetation Control Program gives no plan to cut back on the agency's extravagant use of toxic pesticides. Last year Caltrans sprayed over 100 tons of chemical plant poisons along California roads making it the largest single user of record in the state.The first organized response to the EIR by the environmental community came on August 23. That day environmental organizations held media conferences at locations around the state. Several groups, including West Marin's MOW!, gathered in front of Caltrans' San Francisco headquarters to point out flaws in the EIR and to criticize Caltrans for failing to lead the state and the nation away from the harmful practice of pesticide spraying.On September 16, MOW! followed up with a mailing to 1500 of its supporters and other interested persons urging them to respond to the EIR with objections and concerns. Caltrans will begin consideration of written comments after October 3 but will continue to receive them during preparation of the final EIR.

If Caltrans holds to the EIR's apparent plan of unabated spraying, environmental organizations may be forced to a strategy of litigation and/or legislation.

Comments can be sent to: Doug Boyd & John Allison, CaltransHeadquarters, 1120 "N" Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Pesticides: A Personal Experience

by Tom Candrian

Now that the media is informing us that the pesticide spill into Lake Shasta is barely detectable, please don't lose interest in the pesticide issue.

I have educated myself because my family has been affected by pesticides. We were a young family living in Southern Oregon in the mid-Seventies when the U.S. Forest Service contracted to spray property adjoining our small farm. My son and daughter are still fighting the effects of the toxic drift and the pollution to our water system. We have no way of proving that the 24-D and 245-T used to spray us caused my children's lingering immune system problems or my son's learning disabilities, but the more I learn about the effects of pesticides on children, the more my children fit the classic pattern.

A report by the U.S. Congressional Office of Technology Assessment states that "in general, 'human health' research demonstrates that pesticide poisoning can lead to poor performance on tests involving intellectual functioning, academic skills, abstraction, flexibility of thought, and motor skills; memory disturbances and inability to focus attention deficits in intelligence, reaction time, and manual dexterity; and reduced perceptual speed."

We have been conditioned by "Living Better Through Modern Chemistry: ads and promotional campaigns. Billions of dollars are being spent yearly to promote the use of chemicals in agriculture, in industry and in the home by companies such as Dow Chemical.

The Pesticide Action Group is engaged locally to stop the use of pesticides in our schools and parks. Our long-term goals is to have Marin pesticide-free by 1993. (The term "pesticide" refers to any pesticide, herbicide, fungicide or rodicide.) The Pesticide Action Group has been successful in enrolling the cooperation of the San Rafael Schools' Maintenance Department. They have willingly provided us with information about their pesticide use and their concerns about pesticides. We have provided them with information about the dangers of pesticide use and sources for alternative methods of pest control.

We met with the San Rafael School Board and school superintendent in the spring citing dangers and alternatives

and asked for a moratorium on pesticides in our schools. We simply stated, "Our children may be at risk from pesticides. They are not at risk from weeds." Our request was denied.

A pesticide-free policy can be enacted if community demand is strong enough. In 1981 a group of Berkeley residents got together and educated their city council about the dangers of pesticides. The result was the "no pesticide" policy currently in place through the Parks & Marina Division of Berkeley's Public Works Department. Their menior management analyst, Chuck Roberts, is willing to demonstrate alternative maintenance methods to public officials from other communities.

A no pesticide policy does require more short term expense and is more labor intensive. In the long run, though, can we afford to expose ourselves, our children and future generations to the known and unknown health risks of immaculately groomed street medians?Millions of tons of pesticides just like the one in the tanker that killed every living thing in the Sacramento River near Dunsmuir are applied in the State of California yearly. These poisons do not go away. They reside in our bodies, in our food, in our water, in our ocean...and they kill things.

We want this abuse to stop. This is not a small problem,. It affects us all. You can help to stop the use of pesticides.

If you would like to find out about what pesticides are used on the school or parks that your children frequent, call your school district superintendant or the city, county, or state parks department. Ask for a list of what pesticides are used, when they have been used, and how they have been used.

One parent called the Ross School District requesting this information and was told that they "don't apply pesticides." This is true; they pay a private contractor to use pesticides. My own exhaustive research, as well as information put out by the group, PesticideWatch, indicates that, to this date, no school in California is pesticide-free. You can change this.

Please contact the Pesticide Action Group if you would like moreinformation about pesticides or would like us to address your PTA or other interested groups. We can always use more help. Tom Candrian is Coordinator of the Marin Pesticide Action Group. For more information call 459-4388 or write to P.O.Box 36376, San Rafael 94912.

Moment of Truth on the Jail

Alan Barnett

Once more it will be high noon at Big Pink as the Board of Supervisors square off against big-jail opponents in October. At stake will be the newest of a series of Environmental Impact Reports on the design of the jail. The criminal justice system and Supes haven't been able to get one to stand yet, and this one is the most outrageous.

Last April Judge Beverly Savitt directed the Supes to set aside their approval of the previous EIR because it did not examine whether alternatives to incarceration could reduce the size of a 300-bed pre-trial jail, almost three times the size of the present one at the Civic Center.

To comply with the court ruling, County Attorney Douglas Maloney commissioned a study by jail expert David Bennett, who had prepared a report in 1989 calling for a 300-bed lock-up. Even then Bennett described pre-trial procedures as "out of whack" and urged corrective action. Now he characterized them as "hit-or-miss" and struck hard at the lack of statistical data that prevents the jailers from knowing how to manage effectively. Nevertheless he concludes that the County should build the 300-bed jail.

In their review of the Bennett report, the Sheriff, Probation Director, D.A. and Municipal Court Clerk all publicly conceded the weakness of the jailers' information about their own operations, submitting pages of questions that need answers. The County data processing chief estimates that to get answers would be long and costly. What can be concluded is that officials have been pushing for a big jail for years without knowing whether they need one.

In addition, Bennett writes in his report that many of the people confined in the pre-trial jail do not belong there and should be dealt with by the social services. These include, he says, the mentally ill, the homeless, drug and alcohol abusers and some refugees who do not speak English. He recommends that the County provide separate facilities for them. But since funding is not available, he concedes there is nothing to do but lock them up.

With its multitude of contradictions, the new Bennett report is part of the newest EIR to be considered in October.

The other part is the revised plan of Aaron Green, the associate of Frank Lloyd Wright who saw his master's designs for the Civic Center to completion in the 1960s. He re-entered the fray in 1990 with a design for a jail on the

hilltop adjacent to the Hall of Justice, but sunken to hide it from view.

Now he has revised this design to avoid a few old oaks and to adjust its axis to make it "visually compatible" with the Hall of Justice. Whereas the jail in his first design was to be largely invisible because submerged, it now butts up out of the hill so everyone can see it rising proudly some 20 feet or more from the ground to hide large portions of the Civic Center monument.

Meanwhile, the Supes are proud that they have just sold $28.22 million in bonds to pay for the new jail and two additional office buildings, having done an end run around two votes by local residents, one in 1987, the other two years later, against appropriating money for building a big jail. Taxation without representation is now legal in California since Prop. 13. The Supes went out and offered bonds (Certificates of Participation, they're called) without knowing how much the final jail will cost and, in fact, when they will get clearance to build.

If the Supes approve the new plans, the Marin Advocates for Justice, who for the past five years have been leading the fight against a jail bigger than the County needs, will likely return to court and ask Judge Savitt to once more stop the machine because the Supes have not complied with her previous ruling that the County show cause for the dungeon on the hill.

Only Supervisor Brady Bevis has taken a stand against this proposed plan.

SnapShots

Democratic Action of Marin

DAM! has recently been created to encourage people under 35 to participate in the democratic process and to provide an informal and accessible environment for discussion and action on political concerns. They intend to promote fresh approaches to broaden the base of support for democratic ideals, and generate excitement for the Democratic Party. DAM! is currently working on outreach to schools and is also involved in community projects such as the toxic waste and coastal clean-ups.

Contact: Grant Davis, DAM! P.O.Box 1443, San Rafael CA 94915, 457-1011

EAC and Opposition to the Dillon Beach Golf Course

The county planning department is in the process of considering the application to put a golf course on the edge of the Estero de San Antonio in Dillon Beach. The Environmental Action Committee of West Marin are calling for you to contact the Planning Department and express your opposition. Their particular objections are: It is contrary to the County Wide Plan and inappropriate to the agricultural nature of the area; the narrow roads could not handle the extra traffic generated; and run-off of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers would threaten the Estero de San Antonio (already threatened by Santa Rosa's sewage plans). A zoning change in this case could open the floodgates to other developers.

Contact: EAC, Box 609 Point Reyes Station, CA 94956

Letters to: Mark Riesenfeld, Planning Director, Marin County Planning Dept., Civic Center Room 308, San Rafael CA 94903

Computer Mentors Sought

The CompuMentor Project is looking for volunteer "mentors" —skilled personal computer users who can help nonprofit organizations solve their computer problems. These problems range from application training needs to more advanced technical problems such as customizing software, programming a database, or setting up a computer bulletin board.

In operation for 5 years, CompuMentor has recruited more than 600 computer professionals and power users and has assisted over 450 nonprofits, including social service, health, legal, environmental, women's, minorities', arts, and community organizations of all kinds. CompuMentor matches the mentor's expertise, time availability, and volunteer interests with an appropriate nonprofit. The matches are then monitored on an ongoing basis, to ensure that the arrangement is meeting everyone's needs.

Volunteer opportunities can be short-term — e.g. a single-call 'quick-fix' — or ongoing situations where the mentor 'adopts' a nonprofit. Matches are available with nonprofits throughout the BayArea. They have received a grant from the Marin Community Foundation and are especially interested in recruiting volunteers in Marin County, and mentors with telecommunications skills who can help networks of nonprofits learn to use computer conferencing systems. If you are interested in volunteering, or would just like more information about the project, please contact: CompuMentor, 89 Stillman Street, San Francisco, CA 94107, 512-0473

SnapShots

Marin Watch: A-60 Ballot Initiative

A-60 zoning and the preservation of Marin's environmental quality are threatened by the County Board of Supervisors' willingness to grant special land-use permits and exceptions for land zoned A-60 in the Marin County General Plan. The current focus of the Supervisors' efforts to bend or break A-60 zoning is centered around plans to build the 360-acre Buck Center for Research on Aging on the slopes of Mt. Burdell next to Olompali State Park. Marin Watch, a citizens group formed to protect open space, wetlands and habitat, is putting together a ballot initiative to require public referenda on all changes and exceptions to uses currently permitted on A-60 land. The group must collect 15,000 signatures by mid-January of next year. Anyone interested in lending a hand should contact: Marin Watch at 454-4107.

Federal Funds for Bicycles

Congress is currently considering what has become known as "The Bike Bill". This bill will require states to spend 3% of federal highway funds to improve bike and pedestrian facilities.

The transportation needs of much of the country cannot be met simply by expanding the size and number of roads. There is little if any space to accommodate predicted increases in traffic. In urban areas one-half of all space is already devoted to roads and parking spaces. In Florida, for example, Interstate 95 between Miami and Orlando would have to be widened to 40 lanes to meet expected traffic demand by 2005.

According to a poll by "Bicycling Magazine", 1 in 6 of Americans currently bike to work: with proper facilities, that figure would jump to 1 in 20. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities cost considerably less than building new roadways. While a one mile stretch of bicycle and pedestrian path costs only $46,000, a mile of a 4-lane highway costs approximately $1,000,000.

The goal of the Bike Bill is to promote bicycling as a safe. clean and economical alternative to traditional modes of transportation. H.R. 2101 is an important step towards solving the transportation needs of the future. The bill would require states to use a modest 3% of federal highway funds for bicycle ways and pedestrian paths. Such a requirement would encourage urban planners and developers to work together with bicycle advocates and others to create a practical commuter system for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Here in Marin, for example, we might decide that the most important facility would be for Golden Gate Transit to attach bike racks to their buses, while San Francisco might push for more bike routes for commuters.

The Bike Bill will only become a reality with your contribution to creating a strong grassroots effort. Please make the time to call or write your Congressperson and ask them to co-sponsor Joe Kennedy's "HR 2101 - The Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement Act of 1991". If you don't know the phone number of your Congressperson, call the House Directory at (202)224-3121

Barbara Boxer, Marin's congresswoman, is not yet a sponsor of this legislation despite her normally good environmental record.

For more information or to help with organizing contact Mitra, Committee to Back the Bike Bill, Box 580, Forest Knolls CA 94933 or call (415)488-0944

Gays Organize in Marin

by Robert D. Harmon

"Why do you need a parade in Marin, when you're so close?" several people asked me at the City's parade last June.

All I could do was gesture at the crowd, 500,000 of them. "I knew we were everywhere, but I didn't realize we were everybody."

I could have added that San Francisco's gay community's gains —elected officials, domestic-partners and anti-discrimination laws —all stop at the Golden Gate Bridge toll plaza. We live in Marin, not at 18th and Castro.

But it was simpler: I felt lost in that crowd on Market Street. In Marin's gay parades, I knew the people marching, and could picnic with them afterward in Albert Park. I live here.

I suppose our lifestyles are as typically "Marinite" as our neighbors. We have no neighborhood on the Marin side of the Bay; we've settled with Mr. (or Ms.) Right, or found a home on our own, among the hills and terraces of Marin. Yet the lesbian and gay people in Marin are quietly emerging as a distinct community.

I should begin with the statistics. Given the accepted figure, 10%, then 23,000 gay men and lesbians live in Marin County, enough to people a city the size of Mill Valley and Larkspur combined. Given the high number of "non-families" reported by the last census — 43% in Mill Valley alone — the 10% figure may be small.

A recent market survey found that the Marin gay population ranked 10th nationally. That puts the Marin community behind Manhattan and San Francisco (at #1 and #2), but ahead of L.A., Portland, San Diego, and Pittsburgh.

Numbers are only part of a fuzzy picture, of course. Until recently, the Marin gay community was quiet. Its members tended to work and socialize in the City, just as their neighbors did. Gay bars never flourished in Marin. Between the City's gay night life and the Russian River resorts, only one Marin gay bar hangs on today.

Other choices exist for gay men and lesbians in Marin. Much of Marin gay life centers on the Ministry of Light, a social service organization based in an old schoolhouse in San Anselmo.

The Ministry of Light was founded in 1983 by the Rev. Janie Spahr, a Presbyterian minister. Though started as a Presbyterian outreach, the Ministry is not a church (Rev. Spahr is taking suggestions for a new name), but Marin County's only gay and lesbian agency. "We do lots of information and referral," she adds.

Two of MOL's early programs, with services that help many heterosexuals, have spun off as independent organizations. Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), a support group for family members of gay people, now meets in the Church of Our Savior in Mill Valley.

Marin's Gay Freedom Parade photo courtesy of The Slant

Another MOL spin-off, the **Marin AIDS Project**, now serves as the frontline AIDS group in Marin. Marin's per capita AIDS caseload is #2 in the state, behind San Francisco. MAP's focus is shifting to heterosexuals, along with the epidemic; 20% of Marin's current AIDS cases are straight and this share will rise. HIV infections in gay men are declining — safe sex works — and judging by the recent condom brouhaha at Tam High, straights haven't gotten the message.

AIDS Interfaith of Marin, still part of the Ministry of Light, supports the AIDS effort, providing referrals to callers according to the

needs of each. Also, says Rev. Spahr, "we do lots of inroads and education to a lot of the Marin religious community." She has just taken on a gay Episcopal priest, Rev. David Jenkins, to do pastoral care. "He's wonderful at it," she asserts, adding that he'll also do quarterly interfaith services for people with HIV and their families and friends.

Perhaps AIM does its best work in outreach to the churches of Marin. Sherrie Holmes, MOL's director of development, says, "People with AIDS have not expected a great deal of support from the [Marin] religious community. Now, many more congregations have come forward as volunteers for [delivery of] meals, and inviting people to their services."

The Buck Trust singled out AIM as a model program, one reason for its recent $285,000 religious grant to the Ministry of Light.

Among MOL's many other services (see sidebar), Rainbow's End is a standout. Gays and lesbians who realize their orientation early have few places to turn. Churches, schools, families are often no help, and gay communities have been reluctant to get involved with their kids (to put it more vulgarly, we're leery of being tagged as "child molesters" all over again).

Rainbow's End provides a weekly support group, and counseling, for gay youth. MOL's speakers' bureau often is drawn from these kids, who in turn do outreach to Marin County's schools. Rainbow's End also provides a place to socialize. These kids are underage, and gay bars — traditional meeting spots — are closed to them.

Marin's high school kids hear from another youth group at the College of Marin. The Action Network for Gay and Lesbian Energies (ANGLE) formed in September 1990, providing a social group for college students, as well as outreach to high school students. Many Marin kids go on to College of Marin, and many gay Marin kids will come out there.

Marin's one surviving gay bar, BJ's, has served gay men and lesbians for some years, first on Lincoln Avenue in San Rafael, and now in the Paradise Drive shopping center just off Highway 101. It has drawn criticism for its gloomy interior and occasional cover charges, but it also provided a meeting place before the MOL, before the parades.

The Marin Slant now provides another meeting place. Gay bars often mean gay newspapers, freebies stacked on the cigarette machine, financed by advertising. San Francisco has two weeklies; Santa Rosa, the East Bay, and San Jose all have monthly papers. The Slant appeared in Marin in February 1990, distributed not just at BJ's but at libraries, at the Marin Civic Center, at bookstores like The Depot in Mill Valley, and the Cottage Bookstore in San Rafael.

"I wanted it to be for Marin, strictly local," says Ed Wright, publisher of the Slant. Staffed by volunteers, the paper ran essays and poetry for its first year, but now has shifted towards news and features. The Slant also provides a community bulletin board, with personals and an events calendar.

"I didn't want any sex ads," Wright added, referring to the 1-900 telephone ads that are a staple of many gay papers. "I want a paper that people can display in their office."

The Marin gay market can be lucrative: the number-crunchers tell us that their average household income nationally is over $51,000 for gay men ($45,000 for lesbians), higher in Marin, of course. Certain Marin businesses have aimed at the gay market. The Cottage Bookstore and Waldenbooks (in The Village mall) have gay/lesbian shelves, and Captain Video and Freeze Frame offer gay male videos.

Any U.S. gay community is apt to have Metropolitan Community Church, even if it doesn't have a gay bar. Marin's gay/lesbian church, the MCC of the Redwoods, meets 6 p.m. Sundays at the Presbyterian Church in Larkspur. It is not affiliated with the Ministry of Light, though its pastor, Rev. Coni Staff, is Rev. Janie Spahr's domestic partner.

MCC-R has one spin-off: the Marin Men's Gathering. Founded by a former pastor at MCC-R, Scott Phipps, and begun as an MCC-R outreach to gay men, MMG now serves as a social alternative to BJ's. "It's a networking system," says Phipps, "a place to go — not a dating service." The Men's Gathering is evolving beyond gay and bi males — "all men are welcome," he says.

Marin's gay and lesbian businesspeople network at the Business Roundtable, on the fourth Tuesday of each month at Pagliacci Pizza on San Anselmo's Miracle Mile. Guest speakers have included lawyers, S.F. parade organizers and writers.

Marin County saw its first Gay/Lesbian Freedom Day parade in San Rafael in June 1990. Its main organizer, in 1990 and 1991, was Lea Brown of MOL, but many others also served on the organizing committee. Crowds have been about 500 for each year, the parades avoiding a conflict with San Francisco's parade by scheduling a week earlier.

Marin's gay community observes other holidays: MOL holds an annual fundraiser in September, this year at the

Falkirk Cultural Center. This year it drew over 500 people and $13,500 in contributions. As at the parade, aspiring (straight) politicians worked the crowd.

National Coming Out Day — Oct. 11 — will be marked in Marin at the Novato Youth Center. It's a Daniel-in-the-lions'-den event this year, given the large number of fundamentalist churches in Novato. The event, of course, will call on Marin's gays and lesbians to come out to family, friends and neighbors.

"Coming out" of course, speaks to the most unique part of being gay, especially in Marin. Bigots can single out other people because of skin color, or surname, or accent. Gays can pass, but it's a brittle safeguard: someone who has kept anonymous can be victimized anonymously. If you don't come out, you can be found out, and often at a time and place when no help is close by.

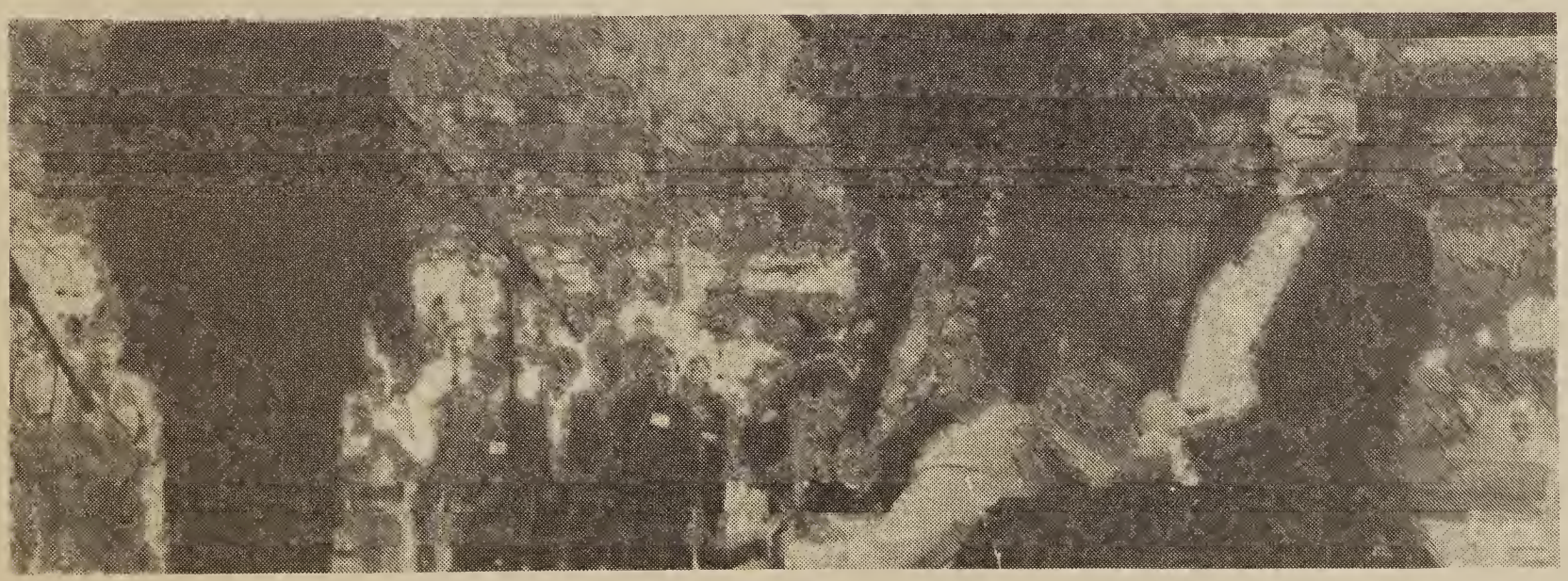
This goes on even in Marin. A Sausalito houseboat owner, Bill Jones, operator of a local bed-and-breakfast, has been harassed since 1985 by his neighbor. The setting is uniquely Marin: the two houseboats look out on Richardson Bay, in a waterfront usually known for its laid-back lifestyle. But the houseboats are five feet apart, Bill's neighbor is a fundamentalist, and once he found out that Bill was gay, the storm signals were up.

This wasn't Bill's first brush with prejudice. He was a popular 5th grade teacher in Marinwood, 35 years ago, so popular that his students recently sought him out for a reunion. But 1957 was his last year as a teacher, once the school district found out he was gay.

But that was in 1957; now, in 1991, people like Bill Jones fight back. His neighbor found himself on the wrong end of a county Fire Marshal inspection — instigated by Jones. The neighbor's boat was found to be a fire hazard, he was evicted, and though he and Jones aren't getting along, he has learned that gay people are changing here in Marin.

Referrals and Services

PFLAG 479-3535
Marin AIDS Project 457-2487
AIDS Interfaith of Marin 457-1129
Ministry of Light 457-1115
Rainbow's End *(youth group)*
Support groups: *lesbian/gay parents, lesbians, gay men, bisexuals speakers' bureau*
HIV Wellness Group: *referrals to therapists, attorneys, other providers*
Women's Interfaith Group *mental health task force (gay/lesbian-sensitive referrals)*
Marin Slant *(advertising, publicity,news services)*
Metropolitan Community Church of the Redwoods 927-2018
Marin Men's Gathering *(gay, bi, straight men)* 382-7760
Marin Roundtable (*business luncheons; info and reservations)* 381-5290



Rev. Janie Spahr photo courtesy of The Slant

Radar In My Car? Stop Right There!

Cheryl Little Deer

On Saturday, July 20, 1991, an article appeared on the front page of the San Francisco Chronicle titled "A Radar to Keep Cars From Crashing" by Don Clark. The article introduced an onboard radar device for automobiles, the first of its kind, developed by IVHS Technologies, Inc. The article read, "A small San Diego-based company, working with the University of California at Berkeley and the California Department of Transportation, is hoping to perfect new technology designed to take some of the burden for accident prevention off the driver."

This VORAD System (Vehicular On-board Radar) sounds like a great idea, but this latest technological wonder could actually promote the condition it was designed to minimize. Recent scientific studies have concluded that sources of electro-magnetic radiation, of which radar is one, disturb brain wave function and slow motor skill responses.

At a recent forum held April 25 in Marin County by The Environmental Forum of Marin, Marin Conservation League and Sierra Club-Marin, the six panelists representing both sides of the electro-magnetic field (EMF) controversy all agreed that research strongly suggests that negative health effects are being induced by this technological pollutant. "Something is definitely going on and, until we understand more fully exactly how EMF is affecting people, we suggest that they practice prudent avoidance in regards to sources of EMF," a panelist said.

Charles Petit, The San Francisco Chronicle science writer, moderated the panel which consisted of Catherine Moore, PG&E electro-magnetic radiation spokesperson, Shelly Rosenblum, EPA Office of Radiation Programs, Dr. Michael Yost, California Department of Health Services, David Bierman, president of Safe Environments, Steven Eabry, EMF research biologist and Susan Molloy, environmental illness expert. Not only did some of these experts suggest that we rethink our current use of EMF emitting sources, but that we halt the introduction of new ones until we can set realistic safety guidelines for those we already have.

My interest in this issue was provoked two years ago when I became extremely reactive to EMF emissions and started noticing certain symptoms in response to exposure to specific sources. Radar stimulates a nervous, irritable state accompanied by a pressure headache between the two hemispheres of my brain which goes away as soon as I am out of range of the radar source. Microwave, on the other hand, induces a vice-grip type of headache at the base of my skull and also dissipates with distance from the source. Both promote a dysfunctional mental confusion similar to a mild epileptic seizure.

Following the panel discussion, I was discussing these symptoms with Susan Molloy, who discussed experiencing comparative symptoms in her presentation. We were overheard by J.M. Weisenburger, a United States park police detective with the GGNRA. It seems that he, too, has a special interest in the negative health effects of EMF and specifically radar. Mr. Weisenburger indicated that he is investigating the high incidence of testicular cancer among police officers who sit in their cars accompanied by their radar guns. It seems that, while they scan us, they zap themselves. One officer has initiated a lawsuit against the radar gun manufacturer he feels is responsible for his recently diagnosed cancer. Mr. Weisenburger suggested that more suits are sure to follow.

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors and the San Francisco Department of Health Services classified EMF as toxic waste in May, 1990. This came following a state funded study investigating the high rate of chronic fatigue, breast cancer and childhood leukemia in the neighborhoods surrounding San Francisco's monolithic Sutro Tower, which emits high levels of EMF.

Shelly Rosenblum revealed at the April 25 forum that the EPA is reluctant to set any suggested safety standards or guidelines for EMF emissions from any source since research can't seem to determine exactly what levels cause effects. He indicated that there is a "window effect" where various sources of EMF have negative health effects at certain levels but not at others and that one source may not have the same "window effect" as another. It appears as well that these windows can vary when other factors, such as strong geo-magnetic fields, are present. According to the EPA, PG&E and DHS representatives, it may take another three to five years before safety standards can be set as they wait for researchers to conclude their studies.

Meanwhile, EMF sensitives don't feel they can wait that long to get relief from the effects of these technological pollutants. As Susan Molloy put it, "My jury has already come in and I wish you guys would do something now!"

Tapes of the April 25 EMF Forum are available from GMSP at PO Box 753, San Anselmo, CA 94960. Send an SASE for order information.

SnapShots

Forests Forever

Faced with the legislature's inability or unwillingness to enact laws which adequately protect California's remaining habitat, Forests Forever is drafting a ballot initiative for the 1992 election. A Draft of this "Watershed and Habitat Protection Initiative" is being submitted to the Attorney General around October 1.

The proposed Watershed and Habitat Protection Initiative would:

* Establish 200' wide riparian zones along natural watercourses. Most activities which degrade streams, rivers and lakes would be prohibited in this zone. Permits would be required for most activities having a potentially adverse impact on riparian habitat;

* prohibit any activity which would further degrade a distressed watershed;

* create a habitat and watershed restoration fund in every county, financed by penalties and timber depletion fees;

* require each county to include an endangered habitat protection element in its general plan, including a no net loss requirement;

* prohibit clearcutting (defined as removing more than 60% of the volume of timber on stands larger than two acres) and shelterwood methods of silviculture;

* extend the application of the California Endangered Species Act to activities likely to cause a significant population decline in any threatened or endangered species, requiring alternatives rather than just mitigations;

* establish a moratorium on cutting ancient forests until the Board of Forestry develops standards for identifying such forests. Imposes severe restrictions on any subsequent logging in ancient forests - no more than 20% of the overstory canopy could be removed, entry limited to once every 40 years, selection logging only;

* require that at least 15% of the forests in every watershed be managed so they evolve into ancient and late serial stage forests;

* mandate sustained yield forestry (total volume logged in ten year period may not exceed volume of timber grown, volume of mature timber cut may not exceed volume of mature trees grown), create feed for any harvesting above sustainable levels;

* require new cumulative standards for measuring cumulative impacts of logging;

* require the Department of Fish & Game to adopt and implement regulations protecting oak woodland habitat, based on best scientific standards, including no net loss policy and preservation of the largest possible number of the oldest trees;

* allow departments within the Resource Agency to collect fees covering the full cost of project review and inspection;

* create Citizen Attorney General rights for all restrictions covered in this initiative, and prohibit courts from demanding large bonds for such actions.

To get involved locally contact: Ken Smith, P.O.Box 3908, San Rafael CA94901, 459-3765.

Green Party Passed the Half-Way Point

The Green Party of California has registered over 41,000 new Greens in its registration drive. In order to achieve ballot status, the Green Party must register a total of 80,000 people by the end of the year. According to the Regional Registration Coordinator, Joe Louis Hoffman, "Everything is right on track. We're going to make it." Once it surpasses 80,000 members, the California Secretary of State will recognize the Green Party of California and allow it to run candidates for state-wide office.

In Marin there are nearly 1200 registered Greens. The Green Party has already surpassed both the Libertarian and Peace and Freedom parties in total members. By the end of October, local organizers predict that the Green Party will surpass the American Independent Party and become the single largest third party in Marin.

Over the weekend of September 28-29, representatives from the Canadian and Mexican Green Parties met in San Francisco with Green Party activists from the United States. This first ever North American Green Conference set the stage for future coordination on bio-regional issues - such as free trade - that confront the entire continent.

The Green Party is made up of people working for peace, social justice, ecology, and a more democratic society. By incorporating the goals of these many organizations it intends to form a broad-based coalition. The Green Party offers the activist community another tool for promoting positive change, along with the existing methods of direct action, lobbying, lawsuits, public education, and alternative institutions. To get more involved with the Green Party here in Marin, leave a message at 45-EARTH.

MARKETPLACE EXCHANGE

GIFT SHOPS

Folkways East
63 Bolinas, Fairfax
453-1209
Tues-Sat. 10:30-6
Traditional arts & crafts of Asia at affordable prices.

Bellwether
12781 Sir Francis Drake, Inverness
669-1540
Gifts & accessories for you and your home. Local and Imported crafts.

Sawtooth Quilt Shop
1560 Fourth St., San Rafael
Fourth St. between E & F Streets
453-1711
Mon-Sat 10-5:30
100% cotton fabrics * classes * quilt restoration.

Crystal Reflections
425 San Anselmo Ave., San Anselmo
454-8233
10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Fine jewelry - Gem Stones - Minerals.

Sherman's General Store
61 Bolinas Rd., Fairfax
454-6576
10-6 M-Sat. Sun 11-3
For the best of everything.

Slightly Touched Greeting Cards
Penny Yrigoyen 454-2684
Hilarious greetings cards. A great new way to laugh. Available at local stores.

CLOTHING STORES

Primitive Art Outlet Store
47 Broadway Ave. Fairfax
454-3669
11-7 daily
Family clothing, jewelry, and gifts at affordable prices. When you shop at Primitive Art you're helping Third World artisans help themselves.

HEALTH PRACTITIONERS

Dr. Linda Elyad &
Dr. William Finn
710 C Street #12 San Rafael
Parking next to 7/11 on B Street
459-3330 by appt. open wkends and eves.
Achieve comfort again with quality Chiropractic care. Self care and movement re-education. Treatment tailored to your specific needs and goals. Massage & adjustment $50.

Stuart Kutchins,
Doctor of Oriental Medicine
32 City Hall Ave. San Anselmo
459-1868 by appointment
Acupuncture, Chinese medicine, postural integration, cranial therapy, visceral manipulation.

San Anselmo Chiropractic;
Neil Kraus, D.C.
130 Greenfield, San Anselmo
456-3435
M-F 8:30-12:30; 2:30-6:30; Sat 9:30-11:30
Family chiropractic care fostering life in balance

Takashu Latimer C.M.T.
Conscious Body Therapy
710 C St. #12 San Rafael
453-7166
By appt M-F 9 am-9 pm and wkends
Soothing, relaxing bodywork using Swedish, lymphatic, deep tissue, sports and Shiatsu massage. Gift certificates available.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Susan Leonard, MA,
MFCC #28553
485-2655
Individual, group, and relationship therapy, conducts ongoing therapy group for women emphasizing ritual, guided visualizations, and creative arts to help unlock old self-limiting patterns. Specializes in addiction recovery and ACA/co-dependency issues. Certified expressive arts therapist.

Hermina M. Rosskopf MS.
MFCC#27476
924-0607
Specializing in older adults & their families. Case management, home visits, support groups & workshops. General therapy for individuals, couples & families. Menopause support group

Barbara Rozen MFCC
1703 Fifth Ave. #205, San Rafael
383-2309
Experienced Psychotherapist and consultant for: adults, older adults and their families, and individuals with coexisting medical and psychological concerns. Crisis management, coordination of care and medication monitoring. Available for home visits.

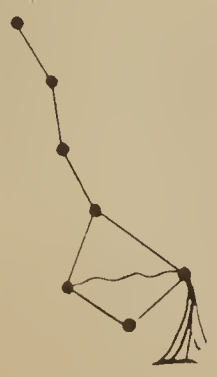
ENVIRONMENTAL TESTING

Safe Environments
400 Preda St., San Leandro
549-9693 or 1-800-356-2663
Allergies, migraines, colds & flu? Get well now. We test on-site for radon, pesticides, formaldehyde, asbestos, electromagnetic radiation. Home or office. Do-it-yourself kits available.

ENVIRONMENTAL PRODUCTS

The Water Store
184 Bon Air Shopping Center, Greenbrae
Off Sir Francis Drake near the junction of Hwy 101 & 580
461-4040
M-Th 10-7; F/Sat 10-5
Water Conservation & Purification systems for the home & office. Bottles, crocks, stands, carbonators, dispensers & other water related products.

Eco Source
Products for a Safer, Cleaner World
380F Morris St., Sebastopol, CA 95472
707-829-7957
Your best source of hard-to-find earth-friendly products for home and office. Visit our showroom or call for FREE 48 page catalog.



WATER CONSERVATION

Big Dipper Irrigation Service
P.O. Box 1988, Novato
902-8638
State-of-the-art drip and sprinkler systems. Consultation, design and installation, repair and maintenance.

NATURAL FOODS

Living Foods
222 Greenfield Ave. San Anselmo
258-0660
149 Throckmorton, Mill Valley
383-7121
Mon-Sat 9-8; Sun 10-7
We are an environmentally conscious Natural Foods Company featuring everything you need for a healthy lifestyle. We feature local organic products whenever possible and carry over 1000 cruelty-free cosmetic and body care products.

Good Earth Natural Foods
123 Bolinas Rd. Fairfax
across the street from Redwood Park
454-0123
Mon-Sat 10-8; Sun 10-6
Marin's leader in organic foods since 1969. Our produce alone makes your visit worthwhile.

BAKERIES

Muffin Mania
2 Bayview, San Rafael
End of B Street-Bayview begins
485-1027
Mon-Fri 6-5; Sat/Sun 6:30-3
Environmentally sound for over 7 years. We have over 30 kinds of wonderful muffins and the best coffee & espresso drinks.

BICYCLES

Sunshine Bicycle Center
737 Center Blvd. Fairfax
459-3334
M-Sat 10-6, till 7 Weds., 11-4 Sun
The ecological way to travel. Bicycles and Accessories featuring Trek, Specialized and Fisher. Expert repairs & services.

NURSERIES

O'Donnell's Fairfax Nursery
1700 Sir Francis Drake, Fairfax
Across from Lucky
453-0372
Every day 9-5:30
Complete line of organic fertilizers. Complete landscape service. Full line of retail products. Lic #561513.

BOOKSTORES

Oliver's Books
645 San Anselmo Ave., San Anselmo
454-4421
Providing the necessary and the unusual. New, used and out of print books.

Marin Teachers Store
901 "C" St., San Rafael
Downtown San Rafael 7 blocks from 101 at 3rd & C
453-9197
Weekdays 10-6; Sat 10-5; Sun 12-5
Featuring multi-cultural books and noted authors and illustrators of children's books

MUSIC

Amazing Grace Music
111 Red Hill Ave. San Anselmo
456-0414
10:30 -6:30 M-F, Sat. till 5:30
Acoustic guitar & accessories; mandolins and banjos; expert repairs.

Ali Akbar College of Music
215 West End Ave., San Rafael
Off Miracle Mile near Shell station
454-6264/office; 454-0581/store
Office M-F 10-5; classes M-W 4-10;
Store M-F 12:30-5:30
Evening classes in North Indian classical music; CDs, cassettes, and instruments: tamboura, harmonium, tabla, mridangan. Visitors welcome.

ENTERTAINMENT

19 Broadway Nightclub
19 Broadway, Fairfax
459-1091
11am - 2am
Live music nightly showcasing local bands

RESTAURANTS

Two Bird Cafe
6921 Sir Francis Drake, Forest Knolls
in the San Geronimo Valley towards Pt. Reyes
488-9952
T-F 7-3; Wkends 8-3; Dinners Th-Sun 5:30-9:30
Stop by on your way to the beach for family dining. Enjoy our outdoor Patio. This Place Cooks!

CAFES

Cafe Espresso
85 Bolinas Road #4, Fairfax
In Fairfax square behind the Women's Fitness Center
485-5535
M-F 7am-6pm, Wkends 8am-6pm
Espresso beverages, fresh pastries, fruit juices & smoothies, light breakfast & lunch.

BED AND BREAKFAST

Rosemary Cottage
Inverness
663-9338
Enjoy romantic seclusion near the Point Reyes National Seashore. Families welcome.

BUSINESS SERVICES

Wendi Kallins
11 Bolinas Road, Fairfax
485-5329
Quality, professional bookkeeping services including payroll, cash flow management, job costing, payables and receivables.

Business Services of Marin-
Boxes & Boxes
518D Tamalpais Dr. Corte Madera
924-0809
In the Park Madera Center,
behind the Shell Station
1683 Novato Blvd. Novato 897-6461
next to Alamo Travel in Bauer Bldg.
at 7th/Tamalpais
M-F 8-6; Sat 10-2
Copy & fax service, packing & shipping, mail services, recycled paper products (see ad in this issue)

COMPUTERS

Thomas Gump, Computer Repair
P.O. Box 291, San Geronimo 94963
488-1043
Professional MAC and PC repair, upgrades, sales, maintenance and training. Quality, reliable service with integrity and value.

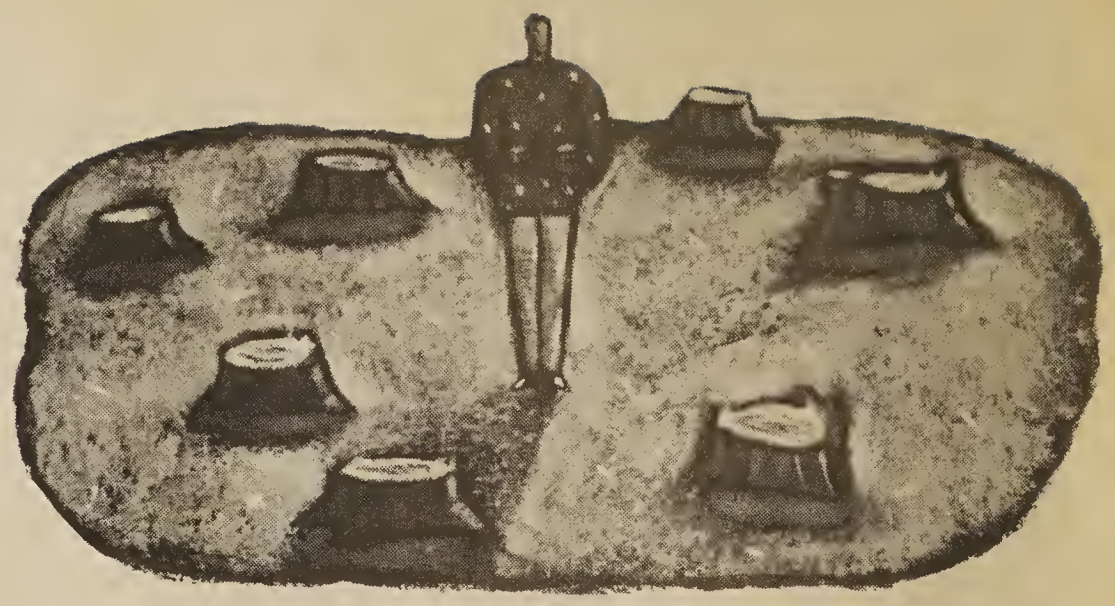
MACs of Fairfax
1912 Sir Francis Drake, Fairfax
459-8858 FAX 459-0258
Sales Training & Support for Macintosh Computer. Business & residential telephone systems too.

PRINTERS

San Anselmo Printing Inkorporated
526 Red Hill Ave., San Anselmo, CA 94960
(415) 453-3200
6am - 5:30pm
Quality craftsmanship at affordable prices.

Artwork by Nic Wilton

Poems by Bob Randolph



A suicidal octopus

Capitalism is like a suicidal octopus
strangling itself with its own tentacles,

sucking blood
and juices
from
its
own
arms

August 6, 1991

Fast food chain

A hamburger for $2.50 is very special
at a fast food chain.
for in it are
azure blue butterflies, tomatoes, giant cicadas,
onions, bits of jaguars and anacondas twenty feet long,
great lilies and wild orchids.

Some beef, a few Venus fly traps,
and 8000 species that haven't been catalogued;
including the mold on the Alarana berries in the rain forests of Panama that would have been
the cure for cancer had we found it in time...

Then add some ground up bits
of laughing monkeys and lavender parrots,
for a little variety.

The land was cleared to graze for beef
for 10 years until the soil erodes
and has no nourishment in Costa Rica.

But never mind, there's always Venezuela and Brazil,
and eventually Canada and California.

so for now...

just put a little more mustard on,

maybe it will cover up the funny taste

January 1989

Artwork by Jennie Oppenheimer

Artwork by Nic Wilton

A burning page

A burning page can ignite an empty building,
it can erase the nuclear arsenals of madmen,
it can be a signal in the night to other rebels in the hills,
it can terrify legislatures of oppression signing
documents creating prisons and gallows for the poor.

A burning page can be a testament,
a statement to the laws of gravity and thermodynamics that
truth is incendiary
will ignite our will our lives
our defiance of those who stifle us
in stock markets filled with the paperwork of capital,
all ignited by a cry of protest
upon a burning page of verse,
a tiny wick to set ablaze the vile seizure of the earth,
done so with deeds and documents
to drain and tyrannize the billions
seeking survival
and meaning in their lives.

July 16, 1991

Acupoetry

A poem
can be like a pair of scissors
stabbed through the wrist
speaking pain to our writing hand.
It is like an acupuncture needle in the earlobe-
telling us truths
told no other way,
or in the small of the back
to help us stand erect,
to give us wisdom.

A poem can be like an icepick
in the heart of a tyrant.

It can be softened momentarily to a pointed massage
of loving fingers over closed eyes,
caresses on the cheek,
making healers of us both.

It can reach deep into our mysteries,
so deftly aimed to find their origins.
It can probe our fingertips,
our eyebrows, our hearts,
the universe, and at last,

our smiles - together.

February 20, 1991

Artwork by Jennie Oppenheimer

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SHE HAD FED HER FEARS SO LONG, HER DREAMS HAD DIED

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__$100 __$50 __$25 __$10 __Other

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